

DOVETON.



VOL. I.

DOVETON;

OR,

THE MAN OF MANY IMPULSES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JERNINGHAM."

"I speak
Of what I know and what we feel within."

WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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DEDICATION.

TO MARY ———

O! for a giant's strength to build a tower—

A cloud-surmounting tower of pilèd thought,
Laughing to scorn the vainly-boasted power

Of time, to shake the fabric I had wrought—
That I might write thy name upon its base,
With a proud look of triumph on my face.

But this poor feeble, tottering thing of nought,
This crumbling heap of unabiding dust,
Is all unworthy of thee; and mistrust
Creeps into my desponding heart as now,
With pale face, weary eyes, and throbbing brow,
I look upon the little I have done,

Until I almost think that thou, *the one*,
Whose praise were sweeter to me than all fame,
Will pity me, and turn aside with shame,
For thy poor friend's sad weakness.—What to me
Were a world's verdict, if condemned by thee?

II.

Oh! would that I could sing as Petrarch sung,
Pouring his soul out in a flood of rhyme,
Mighty as his great passion, which nor time,
Nor myriad-handed circumstance has flung
Into the limbo of forgotten things—
Oh! for such power, that thy dear name might be
Embalmed for ever in sweet poetry—
But I—what can I do?—my feeble wings
Flutter, and droop after their flutterings,
Till my soul faints within me, and, whene'er
I look into the future, I see there
Nothing but utter failure and despair.

III.

But, what, if I should fail?—Are there not things
More worthy of my great endeavours

Than this poor tinsel-glittering bauble—fame?
Friendship, and love, and holiness, and rest—
Are not these things more blessing and more blest?
And knowledge courted, not for what it brings,
But for its own dear sake? I know 'tis wise
To walk along the earth with downcast eyes,
Stifling our sky-ward yearnings. There are gems,
Earth-born, as bright as starry diadems:
Joy-giving love is common as the air;
And love's food—beauty,—is strewn everywhere.
Love!—how light all things are, which men desire,
Weighed against love!—fame lightest. I aspire
To win for my poor self a poet's crown;
Only because it would be passing sweet
To take it from my brows, and lay it down
Humbly at thy dear feet.

IV.

'T were a small tribute—what to thee I owe:
None but ourselves and our Creator know——
There was a youth, who, ever since his birth,
Had walked in perilous darkness o'er the earth;
Against the sharp stones dashing his bare feet,

Until, upon his way, he chanced to meet
A gentle saint, who, in her upraised hand,
Held a bright torch, which o'er the rugged land,
Lighted his stumbling footsteps ; and the youth
Was led into the saving paths of truth
By this sweet saint ; and from a darker fate
Than death was rescued, ere it was too late.
What wonder, then, that the poor youth, as now
He treads his torch-illuminated path, should vow
To dedicate his powers to her, and take
The staff into his hand for her dear sake ;
And pilgrim-like to journey on beside
His gentle torch-bearer—his saint-like guide,
'Tis a sweet tale, and yet a tale of truth—
Thou art the gentle saint, and I the youth.

J. W. K.



DOVETON.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN.

I bear a memory of a pleasant life,
Whose small events I can recall."

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

It is the crown of my ambition to write a book, which I shall never repent of having written, and which no good man will condemn; a book, which in its many pages shall contain nothing that is inordinate—a book, which shall be full of truth, not suffering the calm voice of benignant nature to be over-awed by the loud clamours of a too froward imagination.

With the worst passions of man, I will have nothing to do in this book. I will have no revenge, no blood-thirstiness, no hatred even to the death. I know not what it avails to write of these evil things—if in reality they exist not, 'twere worse than folly to create them ; if they do exist, what kind heart would desire to be reminded of their existence ?

Is not composure better than excitement ? Is it not nobler and wiser to melt the heart than to stir the passions ? Oh ! give me the pictures of Claude Lorraine, and banish those of Salvator Rosa : for now would I bathe my spirit in gentleness, and cast out all unworthy feelings of pride, bitterness, and discontent ; and begin, as it were, a new life in the pages of this book, proposing to myself an end, perhaps too mighty for my weakness to accomplish, but supporting myself, in all my doubts, with the one clear reflection, that it is nobler to be worsted in a conflict with a giant, than to succeed in the demolition of a pigmy.

Thinking, as I do, that peace, and love, and content, and fortitude, and great forbearance, are themes not unworthy of being discoursed upon, and being assured that they exist everywhere, for here is more real goodness in the world than mankind is wont to admit, “ I willingly confine—

and here go I for assistance to one, whose pupil I am proud to account myself—

“ I willingly confine
 My narrative to subjects that excite
 Feelings with these accordant ; love, esteem,
 And admiration ; lifting up a veil,
 A sunbeam introducing among hearts •
 Retired and covert ; so that ye shall have
 Clear images before your gladdened eyes,
 Of nature’s unambitious underwood,
 And flowers that prosper in the shade. And when
 I speak of such among my flock as swerved,
 Or fell, them only will I single out,
 Upon whose lapse or error something more
 Than brotherly forgiveness may attend :
 To such will we restrict our notice ; else
 Better my tongue were mute.” *

I am about to write of myself and of my associates, to lay before my readers the analysis of an individual mind, perhaps somewhat strangely constituted ; to speak of all the workings and misworkings of a complicated piece of machinery, not altogether constructed upon false principles, but exhibiting many errors in the detail, which have impeded its full operation and marred the general unity of the design.

I never see a little child in all the beauty of its primitive innocence without endeavouring — yet

how vain the endeavour!—to recall some of my earliest sensations—to feel as I once felt ere time's contaminating fingers had soiled the purity of my young mind. What a blank, almost unchequered, is all that I can remember of those years. There are dim recollections floating in my brain of wide nurseries and many attendants, and crimson cushions, whereon I used to roll, and of toys almost innumerable, and of a carriage, and a large square with tall dingy houses on each side, and swarms of people walking before them. Little else does my memory body forth of the first five years of my existence. My earliest associations are connected with huge brick houses and teeming thoroughfares, for I was born in the metropolis of England.

“I was reared

In the great city.—

And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.”*

My father was a London merchant, and he failed when I was five years old. I have heard it said that he was an indifferent man of business; but I am quite sure that he was a honest one. He was of a sanguine, speculative nature, very easily imposed upon, and stone deaf to the warnings of experience. I do not think that great speculators are often men of integrity; but my

father was an exception to the general rule, risking no man's money but his own, and paying twenty shillings in the pound shortly after his name appeared in the gazette.* He was sadly shocked by the mischance of his bankruptcy, never having calculated the probabilities of such an untoward event, and having always, for he was of an indolent habit, shrunk from any thing like an investigation, he became acquainted with the embarrassment of his affairs just in time to know that it was hopeless. Then he bestirred himself, and looked about him, and found that he was a ruined man.

It is probable that if my father's mind had been differently constituted, he might even then have saved himself at the eleventh hour. But he was utterly destitute of decision; there was no force, no energy in his character. When the prospect before him was cheering, he was sanguine, even to exuberance; but the first glimmering of adversity,—the first, I mean, of which he was sensible, for he was eminently short-sighted,—plunged him into the slough of despondency so deeply, that he never could extricate himself. And thus it was, that upon the present occasion, it did not for one moment occur to him that, by making a stand against the difficulties he saw approaching, he might probably repel them altogether. When the clouds of adversity gathered

over him, his heart died within him, and his only desire was to betake himself into solitude, if possible, with an unblemished reputation.

"Take all that I have," said my father, "my lands, my tenements, my all. Strip my house of its furniture, nay, take the very books from my shelves ! but leave me, leave me to my repose."

And so it happened, that they *did* take his lands, and his tenements, and his furniture, and his books, every one of which was a drop of blood from his heart ; and the world said that he was an honest man ; and when they had made him a poor one, then they left him to his repose.

He was not sorry to leave the metropolis behind him. Quiet was now the one thing needful to my father. His health was gone, and he was utterly without hope, and well content would he have been to have drawn his cloak over his face, and to have laid himself down to die.

But I am writing in a melancholy strain, and as I would not that this sombre tinting should disfigure more than a tittle of my canvass, I will cease to speak of my afflicted father, for I cannot dwell upon the circumstances of his life, or analyse the morbid constitution of his mind, acted upon as it was by the evil influences of

"Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty,"

with any other than most painful feelings, which I

would not willingly communicate at the very outset of my narrative to the reader. Let me speak, then, of other members of my family.

My mother was the only child of an Indian officer, who was slain at the taking of Seringapatam. She had a settlement of about four hundred a-year, upon which, with the trifling addition of a small annuity belonging to my poor father, we were now destined to live; the collective pronoun including my parents and four children, of which I was the penultimate; for, although we were in reality five in number, my elder brother, whose name was Walter, had fortunately been gazetted a few months before my father, not indeed as a bankrupt, but as an ensign in a marching regiment, so that at the period of our exode from the metropolis, there were, as I have said, four of us, male and female, equally divided.

My brother Walter was the eldest of the family; him I have disposed of in the army: then came my two sisters, whose names were Laura and Fanny, and then, *longo intervallo*, myself, whom they christened Gerard, and little Arthur, who was the pet and the plaything, and certainly the fairest flower by far in our human garden.

And thus reader, I have introduced thee, one and all, to the Doveton family. We six left the city behind us, and turned our faces towards the West.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOMESTEAD.

“ A still retreat
Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,
Secluded, but not buried.”

WORDSWORTH.

THROUGH Berkshire—and I clapped my hands, looking at Virginia Water. Through Hampshire, of which I remember nothing but a trout-stream, intersecting the road. Through Wiltshire, where the “ star-y-pointing ” spire of Sarum’s magnificent cathedral gladdened my young sight. Through Somersetshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, until we came to the borders of the * * * ; we travelled onward, and there we halted.

“ I would end my days here,” said my father,

as he stood before a small dwelling-house, on one of the sweetest spots in the world, and read the tempting monosyllables "to let," upon a board erected in front of it.

"It is too lonely," said my mother. "I think so," said both my sisters. I crowed with delight.

My mother chid me, for I was not a favourite. I was silent; but I raised my eyes, and looked meaningly into my father's face. I longed to say, "Be resolute; this is the place for us."

My father opened the garden gate, and walked slowly towards the house. The house stood upon an eminence, commanding a magnificent view; and my father stopped once or twice, as he ascended the hill, to admire the prospect beneath him. I remember all this, as though it had happened but yesterday. My mother stood at the lower gate, with Arthur and my two sisters. I ran up the hill, beside my father, but he took no notice of me. "Let us live here," I whispered; but he did not hear me. His lips moved slightly, and I thought that he said "Beautiful!"

It was summer; the air was warm, the flowers were sweet, and the birds were singing.

The tears gushed into my eyes. I was a mere child; but I was full of susceptibility—and I thought that I was unloved. All around me, the earth, the air, the sky, were so full of blessings, that I felt, for the first time in my life, a yearning

after perfect happiness, and I said to myself "What avails it that these things are so beautiful, whilst I am unloved?"

My father entered the house. There was a little arbour in the garden, skirted all round with jasmine; and there I went in, and seated myself down, and wept. I thought that I heard somebody calling me; but I made no answer.

My head was between my hands, resting on a rustic table, which stood within the arbour. I felt something pulling me by the skirt of my frock; I looked up; there was my little brother Arthur, all smiles, all cheerfulness, all beauty.

"Arthur," I said, "do you love me?"

"Yes; yes; very much," said Arthur, who could scarcely speak plain, "but mamma call—mamma want you—mamma angry."

I cared about no one's anger; I only thought of Arthur's love. I inclined my head and kissed my baby-brother; and felt quite happy for a moment.

"Come along, Jerry—they are waiting—you have been so long in the summer-house," said Arthur, in the best manner he could, endeavouring to drag me along by an effort of his tiny hand.

I rejoined the party at the garden-gate, to which my father had by this time returned. Four different voices spake harshly to me. I was threatened with a chastisement, but I feared not. My

eyes were fixed upon my brother's face, and I saw the tears rolling down it. His little hand was still within mine; I pressed it. They took him away from me.

But I felt the truth of what the poet has written ;—

“ There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
’Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart : ” *

for though I rejoiced but in the love of a child, there was exceeding comfort in that love.

I was not aware that I had sate for so long a time in the summer-house : but I now learned that during my absence from the party, they had gone on a tour of inspection through the house : and I listened, with eager attention, to acquaint myself with the nature of their verdict. My father was enraptured. In his whole life, he had never beheld a dwelling-place more after his own heart. It was absolute perfection in his eyes—the aspect, the situation, the view, the house itself, and the garden. And then there was a nice little room with glass doors, and niches for book-shelves, which would just do for his study; and moreover, it was so delightfully secluded, three miles, at least, from the town, and not on the high-road, and beautiful, as beautiful could be. It was cer-

* Wordsworth.

tainly the place, of all others, in which he would most wish to set up his rest.

My mother said that the house was well enough, but having "wished that it was nearer the town," she was proceeding to descant forcibly upon the advantages of a suburban residence, when my father interrupted her, exclaiming in a voice of unusual firmness,

"I declare to God, my dear Jane, that I will never again *live in a street*, so it's no use trying to persuade me."

This speech delivered, as it was, with an energy quite miraculous in my father, made me hope that now at least he was about to stand up for his right. But there was nothing in the world which he more hated than an argument, especially when there was any chance of its ending in contumely, as most arguments do : and many a point did he yield to my mother, in the very teeth of his own judgment, because, in his estimation, it was better to yield than to struggle. "Better," saith Solomon, "is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife." And this was my father's philosophy ; nor do I think that he lacked wisdom for encouraging it.

Yet on this occasion I thought that he would be resolute ; though it must be confessed, that for one man to set himself up against three women, in

wordy warfare, a species of contention in which they so eminently excel, requires an effort of courage by no means of an ordinary nature. Besides, my mother was a first-rate disputant, a very Hercules in controversy, whilst each of my sisters stood ready, like Iolas with the hot iron in his hand, to cauterize the arguments of the adversary,—the Hydra's heads, which Mr. Doveton was demolishing.

“I declare to God,” said my father, “that I will never again *live in a street*. It's no use trying to persuade me: I would as soon live in a prison;” and Mr. Doveton assumed an air of determination which did not particularly become him, but which was not without its effect.

“But we might live nearer the town, without living in a street,” replied my mother, and this truism was so obvious to the understandings of my two sisters, that they both of them uttered simultaneously the three monosyllables, “So we might.”

What followed I do not precisely remember. Both parties were somewhat contumacious. My mother said there was no “neighbourhood,” the meaning of which assertion my father did not at first comprehend. My elder sister explained, and was astonished when my father observed, that what they looked upon as an objection, he regarded as a recommendation. The town of * * *,

which in these volumes shall be known by the name of Merry-vale, was just three miles distant from the plot of ground on which we were standing. My mother thought three miles a distance almost interminable; she had never walked so far in her life; neither had my sisters' pedestrian excursions, more than once or twice, been further extended; but my father, accustomed every day to walk backward and forward between the neighbourhood of Regent's Park and the City, thought nothing of the distance; besides, as he pertinently remarked, exercise is a fine thing for the health, and the walk every day would do them good.

- "This Merry-vale appears to me a poor place enough," said my mother.

"Horrid!" cried my sister Laura, "there is not a shop in the place."

"It seems to be full of shops," said my father, drily, "and the market is very well supplied."

"I mean milliners' shops," replied Laura, who delighted in a little finery, and fancied herself a beauty, which she was not.

"Nor a library worth subscribing to," said Fanny, who was a great reader of trash, which she called "polite literature," a name to which it was by no means entitled.

Just at this moment the rattling of carriage-wheels was heard, and in less than a minute a

smart equipage, with three bay horses and a grey, dashed by at a tremendous pace, exciting a cloud of dust, which was not very readily dissipated. Two young gentlemen sate upon the box, one of whom acted as coachman, with all the ease of a practised whip: just as he passed our group, he was, in the language of the road, "springing them," that is to say, letting his horses gallop freely down hill, so that the impetus of the rapid descent might impel them partially up the eminence in advance of them. They were both of them dressed with more attention to eccentricity than to elegance, and I particularly remember that the coachman wore a white hat, with an immoderate brim, and a pair of green spectacles, or goggles.

"There goes the mail!" said my father, wiping the dust out of his eyes as he spoke.

This exclamation was not, it must be acknowledged, indicative of very great sagacity. My sisters smiled, and my mother laughed. "The mail!" they all three cried together.

"The Mail!—and why not?" asked my father.

"Because," replied Mrs. Doveton sarcastically,—"because, my dear, the mail likes best to keep to the high road, and seldom indulges in a digression."

"Besides," added my sister Laura, asserting

that which was not indeed so self-evident a truism as her mother's—"young gentlemen, in white hats, are not in the habit of driving stages."

"I am not so sure of that," said my father.
"But your mother is quite right."

The three ladies then began to wonder who the gentlemen, on the coach-box, could be—"young noblemen, or baronets' sons, at least." My mother was beginning to think, that what she had said about "no neighbourhood," was not quite so correct, after all. A countryman passed by, and my mother stopped him, that he might solve her doubts, upon a point of such immediate importance.

"I don't see that it matters," said my father.

But my mother did, and had my father known all, he would have thought so too; for already did his female adversaries begin to slacken in their opposition to his wishes relating to the dwelling-house before us.

The "carriage and four," was the property of Sir Willoughby Euston, Bart.; and the young gentlemen on the box were his sons.

Moreover, my mother ascertained that Sir Willoughby's seat, Fox Hall, was only one mile distant from Meadow-bank, by which name its proprietor had distinguished the house, which my father was so ambitious of tenanting.

I will not take upon me positively to state that

this circumstance of the carriage-and-four, was the sole cause of my mother's withholding her opposition to the will of my father, respecting the house; but I apprehend that a series of deductions, very skilfully drawn therefrom, had the effect of eliciting her acquiescence. There was one great person in the neighbourhood; and, there being one, it was probable that there were others, as great people were gregarious by nature. It was evident, therefore, that there was "a neighbourhood;" and it was equally plain, that there must be shops—good shops in Merry-vale—for wherever there were rich people, there were sure to be good shops—and as rich people were idle people, and idle people could not do better than read novels all day, there must have been a good library in Merry-vale; and for similar reasons a good milliner; and thus all these three amiable logicians were satisfied, and my father became the tenant of Meadow-bank.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNLOVED ONE.

“ 'Tis very plain,
Some soft spots had their birth in me at first,
If not love, say like love.”

BROWNING'S *Paracelsus*.

I WAS about seven years of age, when we first went to live near Merry-valę. My sisters were many years older; they were just on the borders of womanhood, comely though not actually beautiful, and far from being over-burthened with intellect. My little brother was four years my junior and lovely enough to serve as a model for a sculptor, who would carve an infant Adonis, or body forth the childhood of a god.

It was the curse of my boyhood, to be com-

panionless. I felt the bitterness of solitude in the very spring-time of my existence. Neither father nor mother loved me; too plainly did my young eyes see this. I was quick to observe, and to interpret. Child as I then was, I knew well enough how to read the human countenance, like a book, and to find a history in the tones of a voice. And it was this very knowledge which made me wretched; for the eye kindled not looking upon me; the voice softened not addressing me; the step quickened not approaching me. I felt that I was alone in the world.

Oh! indeed it is a hard lot, to ask for love, and be denied—to bestow, yet not to receive—to see that lavished upon another, which we cannot attract towards ourselves—to yearn after things forbidden, until the poor heart is sinking with despair—to wander here and there, exclaiming in the touching language of the desolate poet

“ Why was I born for love, and love denied to me ? ”

And all this was I doomed to suffer. I was full of love—my father, my mother, my sisters, I loved them all,—and my little brother I adored; but, not one of them returned my affection; for Arthur’s semblance of love had passed away with the first dawn of his boyhood. It was natural that little Arthur should have been the favourite of the

family ; he was the youngest, and the most beautiful, and it was said that he was like his mother, though, for my part, I saw not the resemblance. But I thank my God that I was not jealous ; I desired not to subtract one tittle from the love that was lavished upon Arthur ; I only asked " Is there none left ? Oh ! can ye not bestow a little upon me, without taking from my brother ? "

I blame no one. It may appear strange to some, that loving I was unloved, and it may be thought that those around me were destitute of natural affection. But it was not so. My poor father was broken down in body and in mind. Neither hope nor health did he enjoy. The memory of his misfortunes was fresh upon him, and keenly were those misfortunes felt. He endeavoured to forget them, but he could not. He tried to shut out all those thoughts which might tend, by the force of association, to awaken in his mind a sense of the change that had lately taken place ; and for this purpose he shut himself up, rarely emerging, save at meal-times, from the precincts of his private study, and attempting to absorb his mind in the prosecution of some self-imposed labour. He was a man of the keenest sensibility ; indeed, so tender were his feelings, that he found it necessary to play the hypocrite, and to throw a cloak over them, lest they should

betray him into excesses. And feeling the necessity of this, he assumed a garb of indifference, sometimes exchanged for one of austerity, until from cheating others, he turned to an attempt to cheat himself. Yet he was not altogether successful; for let art do what it may, nature will peep out at times.

As for myself it was not often that he chid me, for I was not often in his presence; but he rarely or never caressed me; indeed, he caressed no one: he seemed to be entirely self-involved, betraying no violent emotions of any kind, but apparently preserving his mind in a state of constant equilibrium: he scarcely ever spoke to me, and if he loved, his love was not mirrored in his actions.

And my mother poured upon Arthur the full cup of her affection, till not one drop of love remained at the bottom of the chalice for me. She was proud of her younger son, and brought him forward upon every occasion. She curled his hair with her own fingers; she dressed him and she undressed him; she sang him every night to sleep and waked him with a kiss in the morning; his crib was beside her bed; his picture was over the mantel-shelf; his childish sayings were ever in her mouth. Happy Arthur! what would I not have given for one of those kind words, which fell in unheeded showers upon thee?

Let nobody blame my mother. It is impossible that any parent should love all her children alike. We cannot control the wanderings of the affections: we cannot love in spite of ourselves. "The soule is often led by secret motions, and loves she knowes not why. There are impulsive privacies, which urge us to a liking even against the Parliam^tall acts of the two Houses, Reason and the Common Sense."

The truth, without a metaphor, is this—that there was every reason why my mother should have preferred Arthur before me; she could not help it, and she *did* prefer him; and preferring him she was too sincere, too honest to conceal her preference. She could not discipline her affections, but she could avoid playing the hypocrite; and thus it was that she *spoiled* Arthur, whilst I was utterly neglected. God forbid that I should blame any one for yielding to the tide of love. Love in any shape is too excellent to be censured.

As for my sisters, they had just reached the age at which the "pomps and vanities of the world" are most powerful to monopolize and to beguile the young heart. They were just beginning to be adults. And if at any period of our lives a little self-importance be excusable, it is surely when our new-born honours of maturity are encircled with

their first radiance, which experience, who is the sworn foe of vanity, has not yet had time to bedim. There is nothing very condemnable in this. My sisters were just beginning to be women ; and it must be confessed that they felt the full importance of their position ; so much so, that thinking of themselves, as they did, they had no time to think about me. I was looked upon as utterly unworthy of a thought from either one or the other of the sisterhood.

Time wore on, and we became settled at Meadow-bank, and the people round about came to call upon us, and Lady Willoughby Euston left her card ; and my mother said that there was a neighbourhood ; and Sir Willoughby having heard my father say that he had never handled a gun in his life, gave him full permission to shoot over his manor ; and the young Eustons, Reginald and Wilfred, called in at Meadow-bank now and then to make fun of my sisters ; and Fanny fell in love with their names, and Laura fell in love with them ; and years passed over my sisters' heads, and still they were the Miss Dovetons ; and Arthur lost a moiety of his beauty, and my mother dropped a moiety of her love ; and Walter got his lieutenancy ; and I was sent off to school, and altogether we were tolerably comfortable.

But nothing happened during that time to induce me to prolong this chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY.

“ ’Tis often thus ;
You see the dreamer sitting hand-in-hand
With one who never dreams ; the restless spirit
Curbing his own hot haste, lest he outstrip
His lazy-pacing friend.”

MS.

I WAS sent to a large school about ninety miles distant from Merry-vale. I was then twelve years old, tall, passably good-looking, and not so backward in my learning, but that I could translate an ode of Horace, and write Latin verses with the aid of a *Gradus* and a Dictionary. I ought to have been rather a fine-looking boy, but my mother, who thought that one head of hair beside her own was quite enough for her to preside over,

very prudently cut off all my curls, thereby much destroying my beauty. And then, again, I was very well made, being straight and broad-shouldered, with round, tapering limbs well put together, and feet and hands, of which any one might have been proud. But my clothes, unfortunately for my appearance, were always so abominably made, that I looked awkward and shambling, and retained not externally one trace of kind nature's symmetrical handy-work. An old waistcoat of my father's cut down, or a spencer converted into a jacket, or any other strange mutation of this sort, did "quite well enough for Gerard," whilst Arthur flaunted it in gay attire, in a tunic of green velvet, and a cap of the same material, with a gold band and a tassel to match, and a belt of morocco leather fastened with a silver buckle round his waist. These are sore trials, it must be confessed, for the philosophy of a sensitive boy.

But I was sent to school, and a new field was opened for the disporting of my affections. "Here," said I, "are multitudes to love; I may choose here; it cannot be possible that all these will turn away from me. I shall find some to love me at last," and these reflections made me very happy, and I began to look around me for a friend.

I was very impatient to consummate the happiness which I had so long been yearning to enjoy

Yet I determined to do nothing inconsiderately, and resolved therefore to survey my companions one and all ere I made my election among so many. My examination was of course confined to the external attributes of my school-fellows. But this was quite enough for me. I had never formed an idea of friendship unconnected with beauty, and now that the reality, as I thought, of what I had so long been dreaming of, was actually within my reach, I naturally began to look about me for the most pleasing countenances and to make my selection amongst them. I knew nothing about schoolboy etiquette. I was all nature; the cramping fetters of conventional thralldom had never yet, for one moment, controlled the excursions of my young mind. I had never checked the exuberance of my feelings; I had never balanced my words, nor set any restraint upon my actions, nor feared to betray my emotions, however extravagant they may have been. I was all openness and simplicity. I knew not what it was to be a hypocrite.

I traversed the playing fields and entered the school-room without feeling the least uneasiness. No body appeared to notice me, and certainly no one molested me. Fear is the result of knowledge; I was ignorant and had no fear. I thought that all the boys were like myself; I had no other notion of a schoolboy.

I went about from place to place, scrutinizing, with a "modest assurance," the countenances of all whom I meet. At length, my eyes alighted upon a face, which appeared to me almost perfect; it belonged to a boy of about my own years; it was fair, and it was radiant with smiles.

I continued to look at the boy, his figure was very elegant: he moved, and he was full of grace. I heard him speak, and his voice was musical.

I was just upon the point of addressing this boy, when I heard my own name pronounced, and felt a hand upon my shoulder—"Doveton!" I turned round, and confronted a tall, stout youth, apparently about seventeen years old, with a bland, honest countenance, not remarkable for its beauty, nor of a particularly intellectual cast, but open, manly, and benevolent in its expression. He was one of the biggest boys I had seen, and I took him for a junior usher.

"Doveton!"

"Yes, Sir," said I.

"Don't call me *Sir*," returned the boy. "We are all on an equality here—all school-fellows together. The masters you may call, '*Sir*,' but me you must call Smith—*John* Smith—for there are other Smiths in the school."

I made no answer, for I knew not why Smith had addressed me; but he did not suffer me to

to remain in my ignorance, for he presently continued,

"Doveton, I have been requested by Dr. Good-enough," (such was the name of our preceptor,) "to take notice of you, and to protect you, and to initiate you in the ways of the school. As you are young and have no friends I may probably be of some use to you. When you want any thing, come to me. You know my name,—John Smith. I will see that you have justice in the school."

I did not quite understand this. I had heard something about *fagging* at school, but my ideas upon the subject were very vague. So I said to Smith, "You mean, then, that I am to be your fag, and that you are to be my master?"

"My good fellow, I mean nothing of the kind. We have no *fagging* in this school," replied Smith. "You are to be my *client*, as the doctor calls it. The thing is customary here. Whenever a new boy comes, he is entrusted to the care of one of us seniors. The fact is, you are to be my *protégé*, and that I am to be your friend."

"My friend!—you will love me, then?"

Smith smiled. "I dare say that I shall *like* you well enough. But don't talk about *loving* here; the boys will laugh at you if you do."

I thought all this very odd; but I said nothing, and Smith resumed, "You have never been to school before, so I see this well enough. You have

been reading some trashy novels instead of Latin and Greek."

"No," said I.

"Then what have you read?"

"Shakspeare."

"Ah!" said Smith, "pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses."

I did not understand this last speech. It seemed to me a jumble of words, without any distinctive meaning. To tell the truth, I was not disposed to regard this Smith with much affection; there appeared to be a sad want of delicacy and refinement in all he said. I did not admire him, because, although I knew it not, I was at this period of my life most essentially an egotist. I was romantic, and I could not help thinking that all people were bound to be the same. But I felt very grateful to my new protector, and would have done any thing to testify my gratitude.

"Well, Doveton, remember what I've told you," continued Smith, about to depart,—"*Is there any thing I can do for you now? Be candid and tell me if there is.*"

"Yes," said I, and I pointed to the fair-faced boy, whose beauty had arrested my attention just before the coming of Smith: "be so good as to tell me the name of that beautiful boy in black, who is standing by the open window."

Smith smiled, both at the nature of my question, and the enthusiasm with which it was urged, and answered, "Trevannion,—Eustace Trevannion,—he is nephew to the Duke of * * *; and certainly a good-looking little fellow. But you must not talk about 'beautiful boys,' the fellows will laugh at you, if you do."

"Well," I thought, "this is a strange place where love and beauty are forbidden to be mentioned."

Smith walked away, and I moved towards the spot where young Trevannion was standing. "Eustace Trevannion," said I to myself, "what a beautiful name to be sure. How much better than John Smith."

Just at this moment the school-bell rang, and Smith came back to me, saying, "Do you know where you are to sit?—You do.—Well; let me see whether your desk is in good order. Has it a lock? Take care that you make good use of the key. You have not yet been posted to a class, so you may amuse yourself, as you like, this school-hour; only keep quiet—stay, I will lend you a book," and he brought me a volume of *Don Quixote*.

I took my seat at the desk allotted to me. My next neighbour was a plain boy, with exceedingly dirty hands. But he was good-natured, and inclined to be communicative. He began talking

to me in an under tone, and I soon forgot the injunctions of John Smith.

"And so," said my talkative neighbour, "you are to be one of Smith's protégés. Let me tell you, you're a deuced lucky fellow; it will all be smooth work with you now."

"And who is this Smith?" said I.

"Who is Smith? Who's Napoleon Buona-parté?"—and my new friend would have added more, but that at this moment one of the masters called upon him for a copy of verses.

I had heard that it was the custom of Dr. Good-enough, to instruct, in his own proper person, the senior and the junior classes of his establishment, and now that my companion had quitted me, I turned my eyes towards the doctor's desk, thinking that very likely I might see my friend Smith standing beside it. And there he was—the first boy of the first class of the first school in the country.

Presently I was rejoined by my dirty-fingered young neighbour. "So Smith," said I "is the first boy in the school?"

"Yes; and a jewel of a fellow—every body likes Smith—from the doctor down to Dick the shoe-boy—we would do any thing for Smith."

"Is he very clever?" I inquired.

"I don't know that he is," replied my neighbour, "I never heard any body say so."

"Well," thought I, "this is very strange—he is neither a beauty nor a genius, yet every body in the school loves him. Happy John Smith!"

"And Trevannion," I said, "Eustace Trevannion—is he very clever—he looks it."

"My companion smiled "Oh! *the young Duke!*—But stop, the doctor is looking."

I heard a scuffling of feet. The senior class was dispersed, and the junior class, which consisted of a number of *very* little boys, were going up with their lessons.

I looked, and amongst these little boys was one much older than the rest, who took his place last but one in the class. I was horror-struck—it was Eustace Trevannion.

And all my castles in the air were demolished in a single moment. My companion beheld my astonishment, and uttered a few words in reply to the question I had put to him. They were quite enough—and the young, the beautiful, the graceful, the high-born—the *honourable* Eustace Trevannion was the most incorrigible dunce in the school.

I was very unhappy. I said to myself, "I have got into a strange place, peopled with John Smiths."

CHAPTER V.

THE PERILS OF DREAM-LAND.

Earth has its flowers ; and 'tis sometimes wise,
To stoop that we may cull them—there are gems,
Lustrous and many, still more lowly-born ;
'Twere a fool's speech to say they are not bright
Because the stars are brighter—Dream no more,
Thou canst not have a Pleiad for thy bride."

MS.

I WAS so much mortified by the discovery of Trevannion's mental imbecility, that it was some time before I could summon courage to fix upon another to be my friend. In the mean time, every succeeding day afforded fresh proofs of Smith's excellence, and of the high opinion in which he was held by his school-fellows. But there was

one thing that astonished me very much. Nobody seemed to acknowledge that he was gifted with any shining qualities, and yet he seemed to do every thing much better than any body else. He was not allowed to be clever, yet he was the best scholar in the academy; he was "no cricketer," yet he headed every score; he had "no idea whatever of fighting," and yet he was the champion of the school. "This was sheer envy," —Not in the least. Nobody envied Smith, and for this reason, every body liked him. He was popular, because he took great care that no one should *feel* his superiority. He had a particularly unassuming way of setting about anything, and was in the constant habit of "running himself down," with no mock-modesty, but with a candour, which especially became him. "You might do this just as well as I do it, if you would but take as much trouble," was a speech frequently in his mouth. He used to say that he was "the head of the school," for no other reason than that he had worked hardest; and that if he was a successful cricketer, it was only because he was a steady one. All this was done without design; and yet if he had studied Rochefoucault all his life he could not by any possibility have alighted upon a more certain recipe for popularity.

I am somewhat inclined to think that Smith's

proneness to self-disparagement, though carried to an undue excess, did not lead him in any great measure, to form a false estimate of his abilities. Though gifted with more sound sense, than any young person I ever knew, he was not naturally a genius—but he was something better, he was a young man with rare powers of application, and judgment, which never led him astray. Let industry pull the oars, and judgment direct the helm, and I'll wager that genius never passes them in the race down the river of life.

Smith was kind to me, and in turn I was grateful; I esteemed him, and in process of time, I almost began to admire him; but I saw not in him the “golden chalice,” which was to receive the “bright wine” of my love.* He counselled me; he restrained me; he protected me; and saved me very often from committing myself. Sometimes he would let me “run my course,” thinking that my own experience might be of more use to me than his precepts. But I always listened to his advice, and if I sometimes neglected to follow it, it was not because I was wilful, but, invariably, because I was weak.

- * Asia! who when my being overflowed
- Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine.

SHELLEY'S *Prometheus*.

One day I said to Smith,—“ You have been very kind to me for some months—doing something for me every day; and I have often told you that I am grateful, and I dare say that you believe me; but I have never yet had an opportunity of proving the gratitude I profess. I wish that you would suffer me, Smith, to do something or other for you.—Is there no way in which I may be useful? Oh! do, do tell me, and don't shake your head.”

Smith smiled at my earnestness, and replied—“ You are a strange little fellow, Doveton; and your character is worth studying. You are an enthusiast; take care that you do not become a visionary. If I thought that you would understand me, I would explain to you what I mean. Do you dream much?”

“ All night; and sometimes, I think, in the day.”

“ I never dream.—Now just tell me what books you have read.”

I could not help thinking that we were wandering a little from the immediate subject of our discourse; but I answered, as I did once before, “ Shakspeare.”

“ Ah! you told me that—what else?”

I thought a little.—“ The Bride of Abydos, Lalla Rookh, and the Loves of the Angels.”

"You could not have read anything worse. You seem to like poetry."

"I doat on it."

"Doat on nothing. Dotage is a melancholy sight."

"Do you think it wrong, Smith, to read poetry?"

"Not at all; I read it myself."

"Do you like Byron?" said I, emboldened by this confession.

"By no means; his philosophy is odious."

I did not see the force of this reply. I thought to myself, "I ask about poetry, and I receive an answer about philosophy? *What have they to do with one another?*"

"Indeed!" said I.

"Now, tell me, Doveton—how old are you?"

"Twelve and a half."

"Then let me advise you to read no more poetry for a year."

My head drooped, and I was silent. I neither liked to disobey Smith, nor to go without poetry for a twelvemonth.

"Do you learn mathematics?" asked Smith.

"No," said I.

"Then write home to your father, and ask his permission to begin next quarter."

I thought to myself, "How this fellow flies off from one subject to another." I could not see the drift of his interrogatories.

Smith walked away; but I presently ran after him, exclaiming, "But is there really nothing that I can do for you? You have not answered my question yet. Oh! do say 'Yes;' I am dying to make myself of use."

"Then," said Smith, "I will save your life. You shall do something for me, Doveton."

"Oh! I am so glad!" and my face brightened up as I spoke.—"What is it that I can do for you, Smith?"

"Go and play at cricket—'twill do you good;" and my monitor walked away, smiling.

Yet, in spite of all this—in spite of Smith's admonitions,—in spite of the restraining influence of his never-ending good sense, which fell upon my enthusiasm like water upon a blazing fire, my heart ceased not to be the home of infinite and unsatisfied longings. It is true, that, at the suggestion of my monitor, I abandoned my poetical studies; but I gained nothing by the abandonment. On the contrary, my poor soul, thus deprived of its accustomed aliment, felt more craving than it had ever felt before. Deprived of books, I had more time to dream. I no longer held communion with the ideal creations of the poet, but with imaginary beings of my own creating. I made a world, and I peopled it myself with a number of beautiful abstractions; and I quite forgot that Smith had ever said to me, "Take care that you don't become a visionary."

Sometimes—but this was not very often—I would look around me, and endeavour to absorb myself in the goings-on of the visible world. I do not think that I saw things aright; my mind was enveloped with a peculiar atmosphere—a misty, one—and whatever it looked upon, wore an aspect undefined and shadowy. Seen through this delusive medium, palpable realities became dim abstractions. I beheld qualities, and not persons—feelings, and not actions—wide principles, and not narrow details. I had a sort of language of my own; and I thought of my school-fellows, not by their proper names, but by the distinguishing characteristics of their idiosyncracies. Thus one was Gentleness, another Anger, a third Genius, and so on.

These far-off contemplations, in which I sometimes indulged, were not wholly unproductive of delight; for in looking around me and tracing the various principles which appeared to actuate my different school-fellows, I discovered, to my infinite joy, that good was more abundant than evil amongst them, and that though they might sometimes go astray it was much more frequently a wrong judgment than a bad heart, which misled them. Indeed there seemed to be every where a vast deal of good feeling. Kindness, generosity, gentleness and forbearance glittered, wherever I turned my eyes, like stars upon a cloudless night;

I sought for good and I found it (as who may not?) and having found it I rejoiced. But it was not enough for me to behold it from afar off; I longed to enjoy it palpably—to commune with it face to face—to find it all in a friend. But when I thought of this I despaired; I was afraid to approach nearer, for many objects, which look beautiful at a distance, are but tawdry and uncouth things, when we draw nigh unto them; and I knew it. “No; no,” said I—“let me dream on—my yearnings must still be unsatisfied. I must rest content with the shadow, for the substance can never be mine.”

One day after a conversation with Smith, which had extended to an unusual length, I began seriously to ask myself whether the strange life I was leading was that of a philosopher or a fool. After one of these colloquies with Smith, some specimens of which I have laid before the reader, my reflections were wont always to assume a somewhat more mundane tone and ceased, perhaps for a full hour, from communing with the invisible world. Upon the present occasion I grovelled more than usual; I pondered over Smith’s words and compared the calm sobriety of his doctrines with the vagrant nature of my wild imaginings, until I began almost to think that he was the greater philosopher of the two. “There is no wisdom,” said I, “in yearning after impossible things. I will content

myself with that which is;" and I began to look around me for the actual.

At this period I had been a year at Dr. Good-enough's, and had not yet suited myself with a friend. I well remember this particular morning. It was spring-time; the air was fresh; the skies were bright; and we were abroad in the meadows. The cricket-season had not yet commenced, and we were enjoying our daily walk in the country—some here and some there, wandering at will, and making the most of our brief season of liberty. When Smith left me, I was alone; and without any definite intention, I turned my steps towards the river.

As I went I was overtaken by a school-fellow, a boy of about my own age, whose name was Hawker. In my catalogue, where qualities stood for persons, he was typified by the title of buoyancy, or some word synonymous with this; for in those days I dealt more largely in ideas than I did in language, and my brain was ever teeming with fancies, which I could not have expressed in words. This boy was the very soul of levity; there were none so light-hearted as he, none blessed with such exuberant spirits, none so heedless, none so short-sighted, none so happy. He lived but in the present moment; the past, the future, were nothing to him. Hope and its twin-brother fear and memory disturbed him not; he

enjoyed life; he found blessings everywhere; he hated no one, he vexed no one, and he "went upon his way rejoicing."

"Come, Doveton—come along with me," cried the boy, panting as he spoke, for he had bounded across the meadow with the fleetness of a young fawn. "I know where a moor-hen's nest is to be found. Come with me, and we will take it."

Smith's words were still ringing in my ears; he had exhorted me to act more, and I thought that there could not be a better opportunity than this of testifying my faith in his doctrines.

"That I will—you are a good fellow, Hawker, come along," and off we started.

We ran as hard as we could, and had presently reached the river's edge. "This is the place," cried Hawker; and taking up a large stone, he threw it amongst the rushes, and the old bird started up and flew across the river.

But it was not quite so easy, as we had anticipated, that it would be, to take possession of the nest. Hawker had a stick in his hand, and with this he endeavoured to reach it, but in vain. At length, straining forward, with a last desperate effort, he over-reached himself, and fell headlong into the water.

The river was very deep in this place; this I knew, and accordingly I was much frightened when I saw Hawker disappear beneath the surface

of the water. "He will be drowned," thought I, and without hesitation I plunged into the water to rescue him.

But in doing this, unfortunately for us both, there were two circumstances which I had entirely overlooked; firstly, that I could not swim a stroke, and, secondly, that young Hawker was one of the best swimmers in the school. My first attempt at *action* was therefore a lamentable failure.

The result of my folly it may be easy to divine: We were both of us very nearly drowned. When Hawker began to strike out, he found me clinging to his back. It was my desire to save him, but instead of this he saved me. Nothing but his admirable swimming and his extreme coolness could have rescued us. When we again stood upon the bank my friend laughed heartily.

"We may as well have the nest, however," said Hawker, "having suffered so much in our attempt to capture it;" and having said this, he plunged again into the river, and bore off the desired booty triumphantly.

When we reached home, we were both of us flogged for getting wet. This was the first time I had been scourged, and I certainly must confess that the chastisement was eminently beneficial; for it had the effect more than any thing else of bringing my soaring fancies down to the common level of human cogitations. There is something

palpable in a good flogging; I did not feel disposed to dream over it.

The history of my aquatic achievements was soon pretty well known throughout the school, and I was laughed at, but I consoled myself with thinking that I could perceive some latent feelings of admiration beneath all the ridicule that was heaped upon me. There was certainly nothing reprehensible in my conduct, but nevertheless, Smith upbraided me.

"Why," said I, "you told me to act."

"To act,—but I did not tell you to drown yourself. You are a greater fool, Doveton, than I suspected," and Smith walked away.

"Well," thought I, "it does not much matter if that fellow does give me up. I am sick of his eternal common sense. Besides, he leaves at the end of this half. I will make Hawker my friend. I don't think that *he* will reject me."

Just at this moment my new friend approached.

"Doveton," said he, "I've been thinking that though we were nearly drowned this morning, it was deuced good-natured in you to jump after me when I tumbled in. I don't see that it makes much difference that you could not swim and I could, because the intention was precisely the same; and so I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

"Rather let me thank you, my dear Hawker,

for to you I am indebted for my life." And my heart yearned towards the boy ; the sluice-gates of my affections were opened ; I poured forth a flood of words, and I felt full of delight.

" You are very kind," said Hawker, " to praise me, and to think that I have done you a service, but depend upon it, that if you had been able to swim like a fish, as I do, and if I had been able to swim just like a stone, as you do, I should never have thought of jumping into the water to pull you out, my dear Doveton."

" But that was my ignorance," said I.

" Your generosity rather," replied my friend, and having said this he ran off, singing all the way as he went.

" I wonder whether he was in earnest," thought I, " or whether he was laughing at me all the time."

CHAPTER VI.

DESPONDENCY.

——— "He came
To Venice, a dejected man ; and fame
Said he was wealthy or he had been so ;
Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe."

SHELLEY.

LET us now return to the family at Meadowbank. I am just fourteen years of age, and at home for the Midsummer holidays. My sisters are still the Miss Dovetons ; and my brother Arthur one of the finest little victims to the misdirections of maternal attachment that has ever lived to be a torment to himself and a curse to every one around him.

And my father—my poor father—still walks he in the shadow of despondency. Time brings

no healing upon its wings, for there is a "rooted sorrow" in my father's heart ; and he can neither look back without remorse nor look forward without fear, nor seek for solace in the heart of his family without the constant recurrence of one bitter reflection—" *I have been an enemy to ye all.*"

Oh ! indeed there is no more bitter dispensation than to seek for a blessing in its own proper home and to find a curse crouching there in its stead.

My father was no philosopher—unless it be philosophy to lie down at the approach of danger, like a poor Hindoo fanatic awaiting the advent of the Juggernaut. It is wise indeed to bear, but not to bear over-much,—to be patient under affliction, but not to be greedy after wretchedness,—to bend, but not to be broken,—to receive meekly the chastisements of Providence, but not—oh ! believe me ; not wise—to take the scourge into our own hands and to lengthen out the measure of our sufferings.

My father—as I have before said—my father was unhappy ; he sought for oblivion, but it came not at his bidding ; he tried to foster the growth of some new-born passion in his breast, or rather I should say to generate an all-engrossing attachment to some particular pursuit. He knew that idleness was the nurse of sorrow, and he resolved not to be idle ; but, unfortunately, nature had endowed him with no strong predilections,

and he soon found that an exotic taste, like plucked flowers planted in a jar of earth, will die long before it can become a rooted feeling in the breast. My father since the days of his boyhood, had dwelt in "the great city;" vast piles of plaster-woven stone had been daily before his eyes, and now that he attempted to attune his soul to the enjoyment of external nature, he found that the attempt was a failure; he went abroad, and he looked around him upon the thousand beauties of inanimate creation; but he could not lose sight of humanity, nor escape out of himself, by elevating his soul into the clear sunshine of philosophic abstraction, high above the misty influences of this sorrow-reeking world. His spirit was clogged to earth; it was capable of no lofty flight; the green fields and the spreading trees, the all-surrounding heaven, the bloomy air-tints on the distant hills—the sinuous river rushing towards the sea—and more than all, the beautiful alternations of light and shadow upon the dædal landscape awakened not his slumbering soul, nor dragged his fettered imagination from its dark prison-house of clay. He tried to soar—to be abstracted—to be drunk, as it were, with the surrounding loveliness, but he could not; it was beyond his power; his spirit crept along the earth.

Then he thought to confine the sphere of his efforts, and he turned aside from the contemplation

of universal nature to commune with an individual link of the great chain of creation. He sought for occupation in the *garden*; but there he found not the treasure he was searching after. His mind worked not with his limbs. He took the spade into his hand, and he brought together a multitude of plants, and he classified them, and he watched their growth; and he spake learnedly of *stamina* and *corollæ* and *monocotyledonous* leaves; but his heart was not in his garden; botany had no charms for him; he saw the flower, but he beheld not its beauties; he marked the specific character of each plant, he investigated all its various properties; but his soul dwelt not admiringly upon the wonders of its organic structure and the strange history of its several developments from the seed to the perfect flower. He had dwelt too long in cities to find joy in a study, which has nature for the object of its investigations; old memories haunted him still; to follow up that, which he had begun, he soon found to be fruitless toil; so he threw aside Linnæus in disgust, and suffered his garden to be neglected.

But it happened soon after this, that walking along the high-street of Merry-vale, my father espied, in the window of a certain broker, a number of old, venerable-looking books, which particularly arrested his attention. My father in the better days of his prosperity had not managed to escape

altogether that "cock-brained and heavy-pursed" *bibliomania*, which prevailed to such an alarming extent at the commencement of the present century; and now that he beheld these old tomes, clad in leather, which two hundred years ago had graced the sides of the ministering animal, he felt a sort of lurking desire to return unto his old pursuit and to begin *collecting* once again. But this desire was but of momentary continuance. He thrust his hands into his pockets to extinguish the fire that was burning there, and muttering to himself "Five, five," meaning thereby, perhaps the number of his children; perhaps the number of hundreds which made up the sum of his income; he walked on with a brisk step, sighing audibly as he went along, and still keeping his hands in his pockets, as though he were striving to restrain the vagrant impulses of some rebellious cash, which loudly proclaimed its ambition to become the slave of another master, or rather, perhaps, I ought to say, the master of another slave.

But he had not proceeded half-way down the street before he halted and turned back. I know not by what process my father's principles underwent such a complete transmutation, but so it was, that purse-in-hand he entered the shop of the above-mentioned broker, and requested, not without some embarrassment, "a sight of the old books in

the window." The truth is, that "faith is weak," and that my father was all weakness.

But in the present instance quite unconsciously he perpetrated an act of surpassing wisdom. He looked, with the eye of a *savant*, one by one at these time-hallowed volumes; he saw their value at once, and as he inspected them, he turned his back upon the broker, for my father, simple as a child in any other position of life, knew well enough how to comport himself discreetly in the presence of a book-dealer; and he deemed it prudent to turn away his face, for the countenance is often eloquent when the tongue utters nought, lest the quick eye of the broker should read there any tokens of delight, and a price be set upon the articles in proportion to the supposed eagerness of the buyer.

"And where did you get this rubbish?" said my father, as he threw down with a contemptuous air the last, but the most valuable of the pile, and taking out his handkerchief to wipe the dust off his hands, turned round to confront the book-seller.

"I got them," replied the broker—but it matters not where he got them. Uncle Benjamin, though knowing enough when household furniture, or wearing apparel, or plate, or jewellery came upon the tapis, was but little scientific in

bookcraft, and my father saw this at a glance. The man was glad to get rid of the books, for they had "lain a long time on hand," and having nothing of the *bibliognoste* about him, he had never even looked at their titles; and, if he had, he would have been none the wiser, for he had never studied Dibdin, or Lowndes. My father on the other hand was anxious to possess them, so that a bargain was soon struck, very much to the satisfaction of both parties; each thinking that he had got the best of it, and exulting in the *easiness* of the other.

I am sorry that I cannot present the inquisitive reader with a complete list of the volumes thus purchased; but amongst the number were Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum*, with its curious Hermetic devices, and Higgins' *Mirror for Magistrates*, and Allot's *England's Parnassus*, and *Certaine learned and elegant Workes of the most noble Fulke, Lord Brooke*—the latter of which was "given in for nothing," because no less than twenty-two pages were absent from the commencement of the book; but as these pages had never been printed, (*vide* Lowndes,) the copy in question was as perfect as any other in existence, and my father, who knew this, chuckled inwardly at the ignorance of the dealer and his own superior sagacity.

But the book of all others, which my father

valued most, though it was not the most valuable, was *the Workes* of MR. JOHN MARSTON, *being Tragedies and Comedies collected into one volume, and printed for WILLIAM SHEARES, at the Harrowe in Britaines Bursse, 1633.*

I have given this volume a paragraph to itself, and transcribed its title-page at full length, because it was the salvation of my father, who took it home with him on the day of his great purchase, and pored over it even until midnight. He had always delighted in old plays; he had read all Gifford's editions and Dodsley's notable collection, and several of Webster's and Middleton's dramas in their original quarto livery: but hitherto Marston had been a stranger to him, somehow or other this fine old play-right, up to this point, had eluded his inquiries, and now that he stumbled upon him as it were in a strange country, my father exulted in the discovery, as he had not exulted for years. The truth is, that he now beheld clearly the "arva beata," which he so long had been seeking. "Yes," said he—"yes, I will do it—I will prepare a new edition of these plays. It is wanted, it has long been wanted. Ford and Massinger have found an editor. Shirley is now

* This is the Work which old Anthony à Wood, who has blundered through certain comely folios of more amusing than vernicious Oxford gossip, declares to have been superintended in its passage through the press by *William Shakspeare, the Comedion!!!*

passing through the press, and shall Marston be inedited?"

The next day he went to the binder, and had the Marston dissected in his presence. The volume was to be interleaved, and in a week the one shabby duodecimo reappeared as two stately octavos.

My father entered, with his whole soul, upon his new duties of editorship. His method of commencing operations was certainly a very ingenious one. He took down from his bookshelves the twenty-one volumes of his *variorum* edition of Shakspeare, and set them out on the table before him, taking care that the last volume, as being the one which contained the index, should be more immediately within his reach. Then he opened his interleaved Marston, and read on until he came to a word which he thought worthy of comment, and then the Shakspearian index was consulted, and the *variorum* notes carried off bodily from one dramatist to illustrate the text of the other. I do not mean that my father was so hard-hearted as to sacrifice his Shakspeare by cutting it up; he had too much respect for his books; he used not the scissors but the pen—transcribing the notes verbatim upon the interleavings of his Marston, and adding thereto whatever he might be able to collect from any other source.

Having paid this homage to the Shakspearian editors, he replaced the twenty-one volumes upon the shelves to which they belonged; then he took down Gifford's Ben Jonson—then his Massinger—then Dr. Nott's edition of Decker's Gulls' Horn-book—a very useful book—and he dealt with them as he had dealt with the Shakspeare, until he had collected a vast body of notes, all more or less applicable to the passages to be illustrated; and he called this editing an old author, and he thought it a delightful occupation, which it was; for when busied with his books in the quiet hermitage of his study, he quite forgot all his misfortunes, and his health visibly improved, and he never retired to bed without blessing old John Marston and his printer Mr. Wm. Sheares.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CRUSHED WORMS.

' Along the winding pathways of the world
Some glide, some crawl, some hurry madly on,
Some skim like swallows, and some writhe like worms—
Mark ye the writhers now."

MS.

I BEGAN my last chapter by saying that I was at home for the Midsummer holidays, and just fourteen years of age. My father was then employed upon the "*What You Will*," which he held to be Marston's *chef d'œuvre*. Sometimes I would enter the study and offer my services to him in the capacity of an amanuensis; for I wrote an excellent hand — much better, indeed, than my father's; but my offers were generally slighted, as I was not considered worthy to fill such an impor-

tant situation as secretary to the editor of John Marston.

I rather suspect that my father thought me a fool; my mother, indeed, often called me one—and perhaps not wholly without reason; for I would sometimes sit for hours together without uttering a word, and they mistook that for heaviness, which was in reality fulness of thought. I was not sullen, but when I ventured to express an opinion, it sometimes happened that I was flouted—sometimes that I was laughed at—always that I was contradicted; and this I did not much like, though it is probable that I owed my discomfiture more frequently to the singularity of my observations than to the unkindness of those who commented on them. I was very unlike all other boys; but certainly not a dullard; though sometimes I behaved in such a manner as to warrant a conjecture of my mental imbecility, returning inapposite answers to the simplest of questions, and making strange blunders upon the most ordinary occasions. The fact is, that I was often “in nubibus,” and I cannot well blame those around me for not comprehending very closely the nature of my cloudward excursions.

One day I was sufficiently collected to discern an unusual commotion in the house. Everybody appeared to be busy; my mother and my sisters were running here and there, giving orders in

every direction, whilst our servants, two stout Devon lasses, hurried about with heavy feet, pouting lips, and moist faces.

I did not in the least know what all this bustle portended. I had a vague presentiment of some impending evil, and I rather thought that the bailiffs were in the house. It was evident that a very important crisis was about speedily to arrive; and being fully impressed with this conviction, I resolved to interrogate the first person I might meet, concerning the cause of this confusion.

The first person I met was my brother Arthur. "Well, Arthur," said I, "what's the matter?"

"What's the matter—nothing's the matter, except that it's full-moon to-night."

My brother used often to ask me in what quarter was the moon; meaning, as I suspect, that I was a lunatic; but I loved the boy; and I forgave him, for he meant not to be unkind.

"I mean," said I "what is the reason of all this bustle in the house—every body appears in a commotion, and something is about to take place."

"Oh! if you mean that," said Arthur, "why, Walter is coming here to-day."

"Walter!" I exclaimed, "and who's Walter?" This was one of those wool-gathering speeches which procured me the appellation of a fool.

"Who's Walter? that's a good one," cried

Arthur;—"who is Gerard? Come, brother, I'll bet you six-pence that you can't tell me your own name before I count fifty:—One, two, three"—and he went on counting, until I interrupted him saying with a voice full of kindness, bending my eyes on him as I spoke,

"But I have not forgotten who is Arthur—no, brother, not that—I may forget Walter, for I have not seen him since my childhood—I may forget myself and my own interests and do many foolish things— but not you, not you, Arthur; believe me I shall never forget *you*;" and I put my arm around my brother's neck and passed my fingers through his long hair.

Arthur raised his eyes and looked into my face. He read whole volumes of kindness there; and he replied, "Well, Gerard—you have always been very good to me; and if I do say things to you sometimes that I have no right to say, I can assure you that I mean nothing; I do not indeed, Gerard—it is all my fault and you must forgive me," and he took my hand into his own, and looked beseechingly in my face.

My eyes swam with tears. "Come Arthur," said I, "should you like a game of cricket? If you come into the field I will bowl to you;" and taking up the bats and wickets, I led Arthur out of the house.

When we had reached the field, Arthur seated

himself upon the ground, and said to me, as I was knocking in the stumps, "No, Gerard, I don't think that you like playing at cricket over much. You are very kind to do this to amuse me; but never mind the cricketing to-day, for I would much rather talk to my brother than play when he does not like it."

I laid myself down on the warm grass beside my brother; and he said to me, "I'll tell you what, Gerard; I often hear very unkind things spoken of you behind your back. Mamma says that you are an idiot, and all that sort of thing; and is very glad when your holidays are over, and I do believe that she wishes you were dead, for one day she said to me, 'Oh! Arthur if you had no brother I should have all the more for you;' but I'll be hanged, if she ever says so again, if I don't give it to her, Gerard.—Why, brother, how odd your face looks, and, Lord! there's blood upon your lips."

Poor Arthur! how little did he know that "the tender mercies of the *ignorant* are cruel," and that these few words of intended kindness had inflicted upon me more anguish than all his taunts and sarcasms had ever done since the first hour that he began to imitate the impertinence of his elders.

"Never mind, Arthur—I am well now,"—and endeavouring to change the subject, I asked him some question about Walter.

"I hope," said Arthur—"that he will bring his

sword, and his pistols, and his cocked hat—by Jove, what fun I will have—I know how to make bullets, and if I don't put one or two into the fat sides of old Randall's pigs, the next time they come into our garden, my name's not Arthur, that's all—I'll be hanged if there's not one there now," and up started Arthur, seizing a big stone, and in less than a minute he was to be seen in hot pursuit of the devoted porker.

I walked towards the house, and going straight to my father's study, I tapped gently at the door.

"Come in—who is there?" cried my father in somewhat of a rough voice.

I entered and saw at once that he was not in a very enviable humour. He was puzzling, as I thought, over some passage of Marston, which baffled his critical sagacity. "It is I, Sir—Gerard—can I help you?"

"Help me? and do you look upon yourself as an abler commentator than your father?—do you expect to succeed where I have failed, Sir, and think that your superior wisdom can throw light upon a subject which all my efforts have been unable to illustrate?"

"You mistake me, my dear Sir; I presumed not to offer any intellectual, but merely some manual, assistance. Is there anything that I can transcribe?"

"Oh! that is it," replied my father, quite sub-

duced by the submissiveness of my manner and the meek respect, with which I addressed him—"oh! that is all; well, sit down, Gerard. There is a passage here which I cannot make out; for I am not in a happy vein to-day:—

————— 'But O to marke yon thing
Sweat to unite acquaintance to his friend,
Labour his praises and indeere his worth
With titles all as formally set forth
As the cap of a Dedicatory Epistle.'

The *Cap*—now what is the *Cap*? *The Cap of a Dedicatory Epistle?*"

"I think, Sir," said I diffidently, "that it means the *illuminated capital* with which it was customary in Marston's days to commence every dedicatory epistle. Look, Sir, at the M here—Many opprobies and aspersions, &c.' how 'formally' is it 'set forth.'"

"S'foot," said my father, "there is something in that; I believe, you're right after all." Then soliloquizing in an under-tone he continued, "The boy's not such a fool as I took him to be. By'r Lady, there's some sense in his sconce."

My father laid his hand upon my head, and was about to speak words of encouragement to me, at least his countenance indicated as much, when the study door was seen to open, and my mother entered the room.

"Mr. Doveton."

"Well; my dear."

"Perhaps you know," continued my mother, "that we expect our son Walter here to-day."

"His letters have forewarned us of his advent," replied my father in his quaint phraseology; for he had adopted an antique mode of speech in honour of his dear John Marston.

"They have," resumed my mother—"our last letter from the captain——"

"You have given him Brevet rank," interrupted my father with a smile.

My mother paid no attention to this sally, but continued, "And perhaps you know that in honour of our son's arrival I have invited a few friends to dine with us, and several of our neighbours to come in the evening, that the Captain——"

"Methinks, my dear love," interrupted my father a second time in a low drawling voice,—"*methinks* that thy vision must be more acute than mine, for I have not yet been fortunate enough, to see our son's promotion in the gazette."

I know not what it could have been that made my father so facetious upon this occasion. My mother, it is certain, was quite unused to such sallies upon the part of her lord and master. Sarcasm was a weapon which she looked upon as one peculiarly her own; and as no doctor likes to drink his own medicines, she did not very much relish this application of her own regimen to herself.

But at all events she knew how to reply : — “ I wonder, Mr. Doveton, that you have the confidence to utter that last word.”

That last word was “ Gazette.” My poor father had been playing with a tigress, and now his head was between the jaws of the animal. He turned quite pale ; the corners of his mouth drooped, and he clutched his knees with both his hands convulsively.

I wept.

“ You might have spared that remark,” said my father.

“ You provoked me,” replied Mrs. Doveton.

“ Nay, my dear, I purposed not to vex thee. I spake but in the jocular vein.”

“ And I paid you back in your own coin,” returned my mother — “ merely *in the jocular vein.*”

“ Nay, my dear, but it is sorry jesting to apply the hot iron where the flesh is most tender.”

“ Well, then, if you are so sensitive you should take care not to expose yourself.”

“ I will, Jane. I was wrong to provoke thee.— Henceforth I will be more watchful. But, tell me, thou wert about to say something regarding the advent of some guests.”

“ Did I not tell you some days ago that the two Mr. Eustons dine here—and the Bellamys, and the Croakers, and young Ord ?”

"No, my dear, I knew nothing about it. But, methinks—" here my father stopped short, fearing a second application of the "hot iron," which had scorched him so unmercifully before.

"And what do you think?" asked my mother.

My father hesitated.

"Well!" said Mrs. Doveton.

My father was in a dilemma, but at length he took courage, and said in a most submissive voice, "I was merely thinking, my dear, that as several years have elapsed since we last gladdened our eyes with a sight of our first-born, it would have been pleasanter to have enjoyed the society of the dear boy, on the first night of his visit to us, in private. Think you not that he will have much to say unto us; and we much to impart unto him? Such intercommunings between long separated friends are amongst the greatest sweetnesses of life."

"Probably," returned my mother, "but they will *keep*, and be none the worse for the postponement of a day."

"And the same might be said of the dinner, party, my dear; but I dare say that you have acted for the best."

"Of course I have; and 'acting for the best' I have come here to tell you, Mr. Doveton, that we shall want the use of your study to night."

"My dear?"

"Yes—I have so arranged it that the refreshments shall be laid out here. This little room will be the very thing for such a purpose—don't you think that it will, Mr. Doveton?"

"No, my dear—I think no such thing. Besides, what do you want with refreshments? Suppers are quite out of date.—My study to be made a refreshment room!—Mrs. Doveton, what am I to do, with my books, my papers, my Marstons?"

"Mr. Doveton, what am I to do with our friends who are coming in the evening—the Browns—the Hawkinses, and the Bradburys—we cannot send them empty away."

"You should have thought of all this before," said my father, in the highest degree indignant—to think of John Marston being turned out of doors to make room for ham-sandwiches, custards and calves-foot-jellies!—the idea of the thing was insupportable, it was enough to excite the choler of an angel.

"But we must have it, Mr. Doveton."

"Mrs. Doveton, you must *not*."

"But I will, though."

"I'm d—d, if you shall"—and my father thumped the table, and looked as I had never seen him look in the whole course of my life. For myself, I began to be frightened, for this was the very first oath that I had ever known to issue.

from his lips, and I felt certain his passions must have arrived at a fearful state of excitation before he could so far forget himself as to swear in the presence of a lady. But human patience, like all other things human, has its limits, and the endurance of my father, thus assailed, could no longer hold out against the attacks of the enemy. "You shan't have my room, Mrs. Doveton; you shan't; I'm d—d if you shall!" cried my father, smiting the table and overturning an inkstand in his wrath. My mother, unaccustomed to such vehemence, looked at her husband quite rigid with astonishment; whilst I, trembling all over, and almost blinded by my tears, rushed out of the room, fully determined that nothing short of the most urgent necessity should ever drive *me* into the commission of a folly so preposterous as matrimony.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE UNBRIDLED CAREER OF LICENTIOUSNESS
ARRESTED BY A GENEROUS IMPULSE.

FLAV. Look, look ; danger is there—
The horse is strong, the rider very weak,
The gad-fly stings the horse, and close beside them
Yawns the dread precipice.—

MAR. I see them not.

FLAV. But see you not a man, who cannot curb
His head-strong passions, which a little thing—
A *very* little thing,—a gad-fly, mark you—
Goads on to fury.

MAR. He will surely fall.—

FLAV. No, no—one noble impulse yet may save him.

MS. TRAGEDY.

I MADE for the hall-door, and just at the threshold of the house I met Arthur, dripping with wet and plentifully bespattered with mud. He was quite out of breath. “What a chase—I have had—to be sure !” said he, puffing and panting as he spoke—“those confounded pigs, Gerard—what do you think ?—I chased them through the orchard—across the meadow—through Bradley’s field—

down the lane—then into the swamp, where the brook is—and somehow or other a dog came out of the flags—and the foremost pig wheeled round suddenly—and cut in just between my legs—capsizing me into the brook—and a deuced muddy brook it is—just look at me—in your whole life, did you ever see such a piebald figure?”—and Arthur, proud of his exploits, turned round that I might view him to advantage, laughing all the time, and vowing to “have it out of the pig.”

I could not help smiling, for I thought of the ingenious history of “Jack and Gill,” which I had read in my childhood, and I said to Arthur, “Shall I pump upon you?” and Arthur said, “You be hanged!”

My brother went into the house, calling out, “Mamma—mamma!” which I was very glad to hear, because I knew that Arthur’s voice, thus appealing to the attention of his mother, would infallibly bring the wordy warfare in the study to a full stop. Satisfied of this, I took my hat, and sallied into the open air.

I passed the garden and struck into the fields, ascending a steep hill by a narrow pathway, which intersected a thriving cornfield, not yet quite ready for the sickle. I thought of Walter as I went; and I pictured him to “my mind’s eye” as a fine, handsome young soldier, frank, generous, and of a manly bearing; and I longed to shake him by the

hand, and to talk with him of “the neighing steed
and the shrill trump” —

“The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war.”

And I kept repeating the name “Walter—Walter
—brother Walter”—as I went along; and I longed
for the hour to arrive which I had fixed upon for
his appearance at Meadow-bank.

I had wandered about half a mile from home,
unheeding whither I went, when suddenly I heard
behind me the tramp of a horse’s feet approaching
me at full gallop. I must endeavour to describe
my position. I was upon an eminence, walking
along a pathway, which bordered a level field of
grass, and ran parallel with the margin of an
almost perpendicular cliff. Nothing but a little
straggling underwood skirted this dangerous de-
scent, which was abrupt enough to form a sort of
high scarp-wall to a road which led towards the
river. It went by the name of “Lambert’s-fall,”
because it was reported that one John Lambert
had met with his death by o’er-toppling the preci-
pice one night, when, unsteady with liquor, he was
returning home from Merry-vale fair.

I heard the tramp of horse’s hoofs approaching
me, and looking up, I beheld a bright bay horse
dashing across the field, at the full stretch of its

speed, in the direction of the spot I was standing upon. It was evident that he who sate upon the animal had the power neither to arrest nor to guide it; and it was equally evident that the situation of both the horse and the rider was one of the most deadly peril. That rider was quite a boy; and, though he retained his seat, like one accustomed to the saddle, and resorted, with extreme presence of mind, to every expedient that jockeyship has devised in aid of such an extremity as this, he was to the full as much at the mercy of the impetuous animal as would have been the tiniest babe. He pulled, he sawed, he jerked; but his efforts were quite infantine. He put forth his whole strength, gathering himself up for each succeeding attempt, and making every muscle of his frame work together; but it was very idle. He might just as well have attempted to stay the tide of a river with a straw. Onward came the infuriated quadruped, increasing his speed as he came—his head down, his ears back, and one cheek of the bit in his mouth. My heart stood still, as I looked at the boy-rider; for I thought that his days were numbered.

Before him was the perpendicular cliff; I cried out, but my voice was feeble. On came the horse and the rider;—I saw the boy, conscious that his struggles were unavailing, raise his eyes and look before him. Then, but not until then, did his

countenance become deadly pale. He was bare-headed and I thought that his face was familiar to me ; but it was distorted with fear ; and I saw not with much distinctness, for there was a whirlpool within my brain, and I was in an agony ; my pulses galloped, a cold tremor seized upon my limbs, and for a moment all was quite dark.

But I was not paralyzed—a sort of blind impulse, like that, which on a former occasion caused me to plunge into the waters of the * * *, drove me forward, and scarcely knowing what I did, I threw myself in the way of the impetuous animal, and seizing hold of the bridle, I swung myself round, and in a moment I was lying on my back.

I was unhurt—the sudden jerk, which I had given to the rein had extricated it from the hands of the rider, so that when I fell, still holding the bridle, the impetus of the onward-going horse swung me on one side quite clear of his hoofs : and my fall, for I held the reins firmly, arrested the progress of the animal. As for the rider, he was unhorsed ; thrown violently out of his saddle by reason of this sudden stoppage, he alighted upon his uncovered head and lay beside me bleeding on the ground.

I was the first to regain my legs. The horse thus unburthened of its rider stood still, looking quite contrite, and suffered me to lead him away to a gate, where I tied him securely. Having

done this I returned to the spot, where the poor boy, whose equestrian feats had terminated in such an unlucky catastrophe, was lying with his face towards the ground. I raised him, and seating myself on the grass, I placed his head upon my knees, and soon recognized the features of a boy, whom I had often before seen in the neighbourhood, and whom I knew to be the son of a widow woman, bearing the name of Moore. The horse too was no stranger to me—it was the property of Reginald Euston, Sir Willoughby's eldest son—and was, as I had often heard him say, “the finest bit of blood in the county.”

Young Moore—his baptismal name was Lawrence, though he more frequently was called Larry—had been stunned by his heavy fall, and his right temple laid open by a sharp flint-stone—perhaps the only one on the whole surface of the field—with which his devoted cranium had the ill-luck to come in contact; but fortunately there was no fracture, and though the wound emitted much blood it did not bear a dangerous aspect, so that I soon ceased to tremble for the safety of the poor boy.

I tried to staunch the blood with a handkerchief; and presently the young unfortunate opened his eyes, and recovering gradually his consciousness, he first looked at me, then at the declivity before us, and then crying faintly, “But where is

Trumpeter—not down—not down there I hope.”—He would have started upon his legs, but that I restrained him, saying, “Quite safe,” and I then exhorted him to be quiet.

“Thank God!—thank God!” cried the boy—but we must make haste, we must indeed or Mr. Euston—oh! never mind my head, Sir.—I shan’t bleed to death this time. But who—?” and he looked into my face—“what! young Mr. Doveton as I live!—and did you save Trumpeter, Mr. Gerard?—then God Almighty bless you, Sir, for I shall never know how to thank you enough.”

I thought to myself, “This is the true voice of gratitude. It was not thus that young Hawker thanked me for jumping into the river * * * !”

I pulled some of the beaver off my hat, and having applied it, as a styptic, to the wounded part I tied a handkerchief round the temples of the boy, and then assisted him to rise, for he was weak from the loss of blood, begging him to lean heavily upon me, and not to exert himself unnecessarily.

“Thank you—thank you, Mr. Gerard,” said the boy—“but I think that if I were to mount again, I might save you the trouble of supporting me; though for the matter of that, Sir, I could walk well enough by myself—but I don’t think Trumpeter will play me another such a scurvy trick to-day.”

I intreated the boy not to mount again, untying

the horse as I spoke ;—" Very well," said he, " I will do what you tell me, Mr. Gerard ; for I owe my life, and Trumpeter's life which is a matter of much more consequence, to your presence of mind, Sir, and I shall never forget this if I live to be as old as Methuselem."

I felt happier at this moment than I had ever felt before, and I began to think whether it would be possible to make this boy my friend. He was not my equal in worldly advantages ; but what was that ?—My vagrant imagination over-leapt such a conventional barrier.—What was it to me that young Moore dwelt in a cottage whilst I dwelt in a house ; or that his mother was a poor soldier's widow whilst mine was the daughter of a general officer ? The boy was about my own age, handsome enough for a king's son, and I felt that I had a claim upon his affections, for happily I had saved his life—but I thought of the family at Meadow-bank, of my unloving mother, and of my vain-glorious sisters, and feeling that situated as I was it would be utterly impossible to associate familiarly with a cottager's boy, I wished that I had been born a peasant, or that social order had never entered into the world to control with its unmeaning distinctions the vagrancies of catholic love.

Lawrence Moore was a noble-looking boy ; with his dark curling hair and his sunburnt

cheeks, and his bright hazel eyes with their dark fringes, he looked like a young shepherd-king, a boy Romulus ignorant of his royalty. I had often seen him before, and often had stood still to gaze at him. Mine was a painter's eye, and the entire appearance of young Moore was essentially picturesque; he was tall for his years, and though not too stout to be ungraceful, he was muscular and broad-shouldered—of a build equally adapted to purposes of strength and activity. His countenance, such as I have described it to have been, was open and radiant, with an expression of daring and good-nature, which were indeed,—for the face rarely lies,—the most distinguishing characteristics of the boy. As for his dress—and to find a trace of the picturesque in the costumes of our highly civilized country, we must descend to the lower walks of life, for beauty and civilization do not travel along the same road—in the summer season, a blue striped shirt, with its broad collars turned over his shoulders, and a pair of loose trousers, generally white, were the principal articles of his apparel. He hated anything that bordered on restraint; he threw aside whatever impeded the free action of his limbs, or checked the natural current of his blood. Even a hat he regarded as a superfluity, and when he went abroad in the fields, he most frequently went bare-headed, well content to brave the sun and the rain

and all inclemencies of weather, about which he cared as little as the stormy petrel on the bosom of the ocean, or the curlew by the river's side.

"I have made but a bad day's work of it," said Lawrence, as we went along, I leading Trumpeter with one arm, whilst my companion leant upon the other,—“a very bad day's work, Mr. Gerard, but it is lucky that my head is broken, and not Trumpeter's knees, so that you see it might have been worse, especially if we both of us had gone right down ‘Lambert's Fall,’ as indeed we were in a fair way of doing, when you——.”

“Never mind me,” said I, breaking in upon young Moore's discursiveness—“but tell me how you came to be mounted on Mr. Euston's crack-horse Trumpeter, and how Trumpeter came to run away with you, like an animal possessed of a devil?”

“And I firmly believe that he was,” replied Lawrence, “unless as may be the case, a cursed gad-fly was digging into him behind. But it was thus; I was up by the warren, for I had been calling on Luke Hanway, the keeper, when Mr. Euston comes riding up, and says to me, ‘Well, Larry, have you thought over what I told you in the Park, the day before yesterday?’ And I said to him, ‘Yes, Mr. Euston, I have thought a great deal about it.’”

“About what?” I asked.

"The business," replied Larry, "that Mr. Euston had been talking to me about by the Park-gates, the day before yesterday."

"And what was that?" said I.

Larry looked confused and blushed slightly as he answered: "The truth is—for I'm sure, Mr. Gerard, that I ought to keep nothing from you—Mr. Euston is a great friend of mine, I mean that he is often very kind to me—and he often takes me out with him in the winter season a rabbiting, and in the summer, fishing or boating—and somehow or other, as he says, he has taken a great fancy to me, and he wishes to take me into service"—here the cheek of the boy was crimsoned, "and he says that I am just the fellow he would like for 'a tiger,' as he calls it, and all that sort of thing; but it was 'no go,' Mr. Gerard, I couldn't do it, I couldn't indeed."

"You were quite right," said I, but I believe that I should have found it difficult, had I been called upon, to justify my words.

"The fact is," continued young Moore, "that I should like well enough to ride Mr. Euston's horses, and to go out with him in the gig—meaning the boat, Mr. Gerard, not the gig that goes upon wheels—and to step over the preserves by the side of him or along the river, fishing-rod in hand—and then to trundle up to London on the top of the Quicksilver Mail. I like to do all these

things, but *not as a servant*, Mr. Gerard, though I like the young squire well enough, and one of these days, I know, he will be Sir Reginald Euston, and the Hall and the Park will be his; but that's no reason that I can see why I should be his servant, though most boys would jump at the offer, hang them for slaves, say I."

I was about to say something about liberty and Great Britain, and the human soul, when Larry continued—"The fact is, Mr. Gerard, that, though you may think me a foolish boy and above my station, and all that sort of thing, like most other people, I have my fancies, and my fancy is to be free; you will say, perhaps, that I have no right to be proud, being only a poor soldier's boy, but my father was nobody's servant, and wore nobody's livery but the king's, or rather, I should say, the country's; and I *am* proud, however wrong it may be, too proud by far to be stable-boy and valet to Mr. Reginald Euston. And then I hate all restraint; I like to be my own master, to go where I will, not to be sent where others will; to wake when I like, to sleep when I like, to dress as I like; to be abroad in the fields when it pleases me, or at home by my chimney-corner. In short, you see I was not born to be a servant, so I told Mr. Euston that I was very sorry to refuse him, but that I could not bring myself to be any man's, not even his, servant."

“ And did you tell your mother of all this ? ”

“ Oh ! no, sir, not one word ; it would have wounded her to the quick to think that the offer had been made to me.”

“ Is she then proud like yourself ? ”

“ Oh, no, she is not proud, Mr. Gerard ; she has nothing wicked about her. She is very good ; and many's the time that I have heard her say, it becomes us to be humble,—but, I know, if there is one thing in the world, which she would rather have me not be,—its the livery servant of a rich man,—and so I said nothing about it.”

“ And what did Mr. Euston say, when you declined acceding to his proposals ? ”

“ Oh ! he laughed and he said ‘ By Jupiter, you are a strange boy, Larry, — but I don't like you a bit the less for speaking out freely on the subject ; ’ —and then he told me that he had a bran new fishing-rod, that he intended to give me as a present in return for the brace of trout which I sent up to the hall on Wednesday,—then he asked me to hold Trumpeter, and said, ‘ You may mount, if you like,’ complimenting me at the same time on my horsemanship, but telling me not to ride away,—and so I mounted, whilst Mr. Euston went into Hanway's cottage, to speak, as he said, about some dogs. Presently he came out with Luke, and said that they were going down to Sidely Bottom to talk with Jones about the pole-

cats, and that they would be half an hour away. 'And so,' said Mr. Euston,—'if you have nothing better to do, you may trot Trumpeter about a little, but don't go across the road,' which I promised not to do, jolly as any ten, to think of riding on Trumpeter. Well, sir, I trotted about a little on the turf, keeping him well in hand, for he seemed half inclined to make a bolt of it, being accustomed to thirteen stone, and feeling only eight on his back. However, I did keep him in, riding from one field to another, and enjoying myself very much, until suddenly he kicked out behind and went off like mad. I pulled with all my strength, but I might just as well have tied a rope to the church-steeple, and attempted to pull it down, for he managed to take the bit into his mouth, and then it was all over with me, I knew, though I was not much frightened at the time, until after galloping some way, I looked up and saw "Lambert's Fall" right-a-head; and then I gave myself up,—but here am I, not much the worse, and here is Trumpeter just as well as ever. 'All's well that ends well,' they say, and if we get to the warren in time, no harm will be done after all, barring my poor broken head, which is nothing. — Confound the blood, I wish it would not trickle down my face so.—Oh! never mind it, Mr. Gerard."

We were just then on the brow of a hill, which

commanded a view of the Widow Moore's cottage ; indeed the cottage was at the foot of the hill, and as we looked down upon it, we beheld a little group sitting at the door—a group of three—and I said to Larry, “ Would it not be better for you to stop here, and for me to go on with the horse ? ”

“ Oh ! no ; I am not hurt ;—besides, mother and Ella and Michael will wonder to see me in this plight, and be frightened.—I had better go on, and Luke Hanway, who knows pretty well how to doctor a dog that has spiked itself or been torn by a badger, will soon set me to rights, and plaster up my head in a jiffy.”

“ Nonsense !—you shall do no such thing, Larry Moore,” said I.—“ Come along with me ;”—and we descended the hill in a circuitous direction, for the better accommodation of Trumpeter, who was not, like his biped conductors, accustomed to such precipitous descents.

In a few minutes, we stood before the cottage-gate ; but the cottage, and its gentle indwellers, shall be described in a new chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COTTAGE AND ITS INDWELLERS.

“ On Devon’s leafy shores, a sheltered hold,
In a soft clime encouraging the soil
To a luxurious beauty.”

WORDSWORTH.

“ No plot so narrow, be but nature there—
No waste so vacant—but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to love and beauty.”

COLFRIDGE.

I wish, reader, that I could open my portfolio, and show thee a water-colour drawing, done in the right Copley Fielding style, of the Widow Moore’s rustic cottage, and of the picturesque scenery around it. Peradventure, thou hast visited Devonshire; then thou hast seen the sweetest shire of England—“ in my opinion,” as the poor

Spanish Hidalgo said to Lazarillo de Tormes, "*the delicatest bit*"* in the country. Lookest thou for coast-scenery? there is the bay of Tor;—for river-scenery? there is the woody Dart;—for inland-scenery magnificently extensive? there is the view from the top of Haldon, whence thou mayest see the distant ocean, the Exe, the Teign, and Powderham woods, and, on the other side, the city, with its beautiful cathedral sleeping at the foot of the hill.

After all, language is but a poor instrument to draw pictures withal. Sentences are but sorry scene-painters, and a few strokes of the pencil more effective than a multiplication of words. Nevertheless must I attempt a description, though I would fain throw aside the pen, and take up the pallet in its stead.

It was a thatched cottage, in a winding lane, standing at the foot of a hill, or rather at the juncture of three hills, and almost buried in trees. It stood as it were in a sort of cove, sheltered rearward and on either side; but from the front you looked along a valley, and could see the river

* See the "Adventures of Lazarillo de Tormes," by Don Diego de Mendoza.—"How," cried the 'Squire, interrupting me,—"*an ox-foot?*"—"Yes, sir," said I; "*an ox-foot.*"—"Ah? then," quoth he, "*thou hast, in my opinion, the delicatest bit in Spain, there being neither partridge, pheasant, nor any other thing, I like nearly so well as that.*"

gracefully winding, and catch a distant glimpse of the blue ocean, and of the smoke from the little seaport town which stood at the mouth of the * * *, from which it derived its name. Almost in front of the cottage, a shallow streamlet intersected the road, and there was a little bridge across it, for the benefit of foot-passengers, made by a large block of granite set horizontally upon two other pieces, on opposite sides of the brook. At the back of Mrs. Moore's cottage was the fountain whence the waters proceeded, and it was said to be the purest spring in the whole county of Devon: the farmers would bring down their horses to water them at this brook, and many of the neighbouring gentry would send for daily supplies of the rare elementary treasure it yielded in such profusion.

The cottage stood in a little garden, flanked with trees of various descriptions. The climate was so mild, the spot so sheltered, and the soil so eminently productive, that there was scarcely a season of the year when this little garden appeared not to be quite full. Now indeed it was almost over-stocked, such a profusion of many things did it exhibit, some beautiful and some homely, some flaunting in their gay attire, some creeping humbly along the earth, some growing there for household purposes, some merely to gladden the sight, some perchance unbidden, yet the widow Moore was a

model of neatness, and if she suffered some few weeds to abide in her little garden it was only because she doubted whether they might not possibly be flowers.

The tall holly-oak was there, lifting up its stately head, and the many-coloured carnation, and the rose with its mossy calyx, sweetest of all flowers; and there was a large blue hydrangia keeping watch upon either side of the cottage-door; and there were lilies, which emitted an odour sickly as their own pale hue: and here and there a gorgeous sun-flower, and a pendulous red fucia, shaking its graceful bells. And upon the other-side of the gravel pathway, which led from the wicket gate by the road-side, up to the cottage porch, were fruits, and herbs, and other useful plants to be seen in homely array, courting not the admiration of the passer by, but more valued by the dwellers in that little tenement than their gayer brethren of the garden.

The cottage had a thatched roof with windows peeping out of the thatch. The walls thereof had originally been white, but now there was scarcely a glimpse of the bare fabric to be seen; for a vine, and a passion-flower, and a gigantic rose-tree had entirely overgrown the building, mingling their leaves together, and the tendrils of the two former plants clinging to, and intertwining with, one another. The roses peeped into the chamber windows, upon the ledges of which you might see

some pots of branching geranium, and bunches of unripe grapes hung down, giving promise of a plentiful vintage. The cottage porch was a complete bower of jessamine ; indeed, so luxuriant was the spreading greenery that you could see nothing of the trellice-work to which it clung. In short, the whole aspect of this humble dwelling was that of a human nest. It was beautiful ; and the bright sun, which had scarcely passed its meridian, shone cheerfully upon all things there, making the flowers more bright, and causing the waters of the brook to glitter as they streamed across the road.

On a chair just outside the porch the widow Moore sate in the sun-light with an open book resting on her knee, for she had been reading—and two fair-haired children, a boy on her right hand and a young maiden on her left, were sitting, each of them on a low stool, looking towards their mother with upturned faces, and listening, with an appearance of wrapt attention, to the words which proceeded from her mouth. A more beautiful group of figures never gave vitality to a landscape.

The widow Moore was a comely matron, some years past the prime of life. She was an old woman indeed to be the mother of such young children, having numbered some fifty-six summers, or winters rather, for there was that in her face which told you that she had encountered the wintry blast more frequently, upon her weary pilgrimage,

than she had enjoyed the warm sun and light breezes of the milder season. Very manifest was it to all who looked upon that pale thin face, with its drooping mouth and its lustreless eyes, that long suffering had been her portion, and that beauty had once shone upon a countenance, which time could not render unseemly, nor much trouble deform. Attired in decent apparel, becoming her lowly condition, and remarkable only for the snowy whiteness of her cap and a general air of extreme neatness, she looked like a decayed gentle-woman, such as you may see in some of our better sort of almshouses, which are appropriated to the widows of the clergy.

But her children—how beautiful they were, that boy and that little maiden, sitting bare-headed in the sun. Michael and Ella, how like they were; almost might they have been taken for twins. The same light flowing hair, the same oval contour of face, the same delicately chiselled features and *perfect* complexion, marked them both, and as they sate there upon their lowly seats, they seemed to be of the same height, both tall, both slender, both graceful.

And yet they were not altogether alike, for Michael's eyes were hazel and Ella's blue; and Michael, who was the elder of the twain, was many inches taller than his sister. Perhaps the boy had seen thirteen summers, and the little

maiden one summer less ; they were both of them tall for their years, as Lawrence was, but this was all the likeness, if likeness indeed it can be called, which they bore to their elder brother. The sunburnt face, the dark hair, the restless eyes, the sturdy frame, and, more than all, the dare-devil expression, which characterized the countenance of Larry Moore, presented a strange contrast to the fair cheeks, the yellow locks and the gentle aspects of his meek-eyed brother and sister. If either of the three resembled the mother it was Lawrence ; but the resemblance was a fleeting one, and only perceptible when certain moods of mind caused a peculiar expression to play upon the features of either the parent or the child ; indeed so transitory was the likeness, that none but a steady watcher could trace it, for it was gone almost as soon as it was engendered, like a tint upon a western sky, or a cloud-created shadow upon a landscape.

How much simple elegance, how much natural grace adorned these dwellers in a cottage ! There sat Michael with his little blue jacket, his white trousers and his laced shoes : and there was Ella with her blue-checked frock, her white stockings, without a wrinkle, sitting closely to her taper ankles, her little apron with pockets in front, and her shoe-buckles, glittering on the instep of a foot, small as Cinderella's—and though all these articles

of raiment, save the latter, were of the homeliest material, the neatness and the cleanliness thereof made them appear of a finer texture, whilst the graceful persons of the children imparted to their simple habits an aspect of superior workmanship, which in reality belonged to the wearer and not to the thing worn. Dost thou wonder, reader, that such grace should have dwelt in a lowly cottage? Thou dost; then I will answer thee in the words of one—the master-poet of his age:—

“ If ye inquire

How such consummate eloquence was bred

Amid these wilds—

A simple answer may suffice—even this ;

'Twas Nature's will ; who sometimes undertakes,

For the reproof of human vanity,

*Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.” **

And Michael and Ella Moore were the especial favourites of nature.

Having tied Trumpeter, who, under ordinary circumstances, was the gentlest animal in the world, to the wicket-gate, Lawrence and I entered the garden together. So intent was the Widow Moore upon the explanation of certain matters in the book from which she had been reading, and so intently were the two children at her feet listening to this explanation, that our approach was un-

* Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

perceived, until we stood within a few yards of the group.

“There are many good and excellent things in the world,” said the Widow Moore, “which, in reckoning up the sum of our happiness, we are wont too often to overlook. We complain of small evils, but are not grateful for small favours. We strike the balance very unfairly, setting down the absence of positive pleasure as evil, but not the absence of pain as a good. This absence of positive suffering is what our author calls a *privative blessing*. ‘The very privative blessings,’ saith he, ‘the blessings of immunity, safeguard, liberty, and integrity, which we commonly enjoy, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life.’ We ought to be thankful that we are not slaves, that we live not in constant fear, that we are not deformed, or subject to any painful constitutional disease. We ought to be thankful—” but here she paused, for Ella uttered a faint cry, and, rising from her lowly seat, exclaimed,

“Oh! my poor brother! what accident has happened to you now?”

Mrs. Moore lifted up her eyes, and in a moment she was by the side of her first-born. “Larry, my boy!—quick,—tell me how comes this blood upon your face, and why is your head thus bandaged?—some frightful accident has befallen you;”—and

the pale face of the widow woman 'waxed still paler as she spoke.

"Oh! nothing, mother,—a mere scratch.—I am not hurt, I assure you;—but where—"

"Oh! my dear boy! do not say you are not hurt. Thus is it always with you, Larry;—you come home covered with blood, and tell me that you are not hurt."

"Nor am I, mother. Mr. Gerard Doveton will tell you the same story;"—and Mrs. Moore, whose anxiety for her son had caused me to be unnoticed at first, now curtseyed to me, and, having apologized for her inattention, appealed to me, with a supplicating voice, and a look which seemed to say, "Oh! tell me the truth, I beseech you."

And I did tell her the truth, in a few words. I said that Larry had been thrown from a horse, but that there was no danger to be feared from the accident.

"Well, mother, you see I am right;—but I shall have sundry additions to make to the story, presently, for Mr. Gerard has not told you half;—but, first of all, where's Michael?"

"Here—here am I," cried the fair-haired boy, emerging from the cottage-porch with a basin of water, a sponge, and some pieces of linen rag.—
"Do you want anything, Larry?"

“Yes, Mike ;—you know Luke Hanway’s—Mr. Euston is waiting for his horse. I have often told you of Trumpeter—there he is, tied to the gate ;—be quick, there’s a good fellow. Now, mother, you may take off the bandage, and just judge for yourself.”

Larry knelt down at the feet of his mother, who seated herself, and with a gentle hand removed the bandage from the head of her son. The blood was still flowing plentifully, and Mrs. Moore began to sponge the wound, Ella holding the basin, and turning aside her head ; for, being unused to the sight of blood, she could not look upon it without a sensation of sickness, which she was unable, though she strove, to overcome. So I said to her, “Go in, and let me hold the basin, if you please.”

“Oh ! no, sir ; it is my business to do this ;—when my poor brother is hurt, my place ought surely to be beside him ;—but I am very silly, I know.—Gracious heavens ! what is Larry about ?”

The boy had suddenly started up from his kneeling posture, and broken away from his mother, who had scarcely time to utter a word before he was to be seen running towards the wicket-gate, crying out, “Michael ! Michael !” the blood streaming from his face as he went, but he taking no heed of it.—“Michael ! Michael ! for God’s sake, stop !—dear brother Michael, stop !”

Lawrence Moore passed the gate, and I ran

after him with all the rapidity that I could summon to my assistance. Dashing at full speed across the brook, he ran up the steep lane after his brother, still crying out, "Michael! Michael! for God's sake, stop!"

At length he made himself heard, and Michael obeyed his brother. He halted, and in less than a minute we both of us stood beside him.

"Michael!"

"Lawrence!"

"Are you mad?"

"Are you?"

"No, Michael;—I saw you mount—I saw you put your foot in the stirrup, and ride off on Trumpeter's back. Now, pray, pray, my brother, dismount—you know that you are nothing of a horseman;—what could have induced you to mount?—there, there, my dear Michael, get down, and lead Trumpeter to Hanway's."

Michael looked at his brother, as though he scarcely comprehended the meaning of this address. "Are you afraid that I shall throw him down," said he, "and damage the poor animal?"

"Oh! no, not that," replied Lawrence; "I was not thinking of the animal—I was only thinking of you. For the value of ten thousand Trumpeters, I would not have you mount him again. Mr. Euston might get another horse, but where could I get another brother? Mr. Euston has

plenty of money, but all the money in the world could not buy me another brother Michael. You are no horseman—you are little accustomed to riding: now, I *am*; and look at my head. There is Mr. Doveton, he can tell you that, but for him, I should now be a dead body at the foot of ‘Lambert’s-fall.’—There, Michael, you are a good fellow;—how glad I am to see you on your legs. —And you will promise me not to mount again?—You will? then I shall go back contented.”

I said to myself, “There is exceeding strength in the brotherly love of this boy. Not half an hour ago, and he looked upon *himself* as nothing in comparison with the horse, and now he sets the animal at nought; for Michael’s safety, not his own, is concerned; and Lawrence Moore loves his brother more dearly than he loves himself.”

Nor was Michael’s affection for Lawrence less intense. He had mounted Trumpeter, and set him into a gallop, because Lawrence had said to him, “Be quick;” and because he was all eagerness to return as soon as possible to his wounded brother. It had never occurred to him that there was any danger in mounting a strange horse. He had not heard the account of Larry’s accident; and if he had, the same impulse would have driven him to leap into the saddle as now, albeit he was little used to bestride an animal of any

kind. When he heard Larry's voice, calling after him, he was astonished, as well he might have been; and when he saw his brother exerting every energy to overtake him, the face of the wounded boy all besmeared with his own blood, Michael's heart stood still with anxiety, for he thought no less frightful a visitation than insanity had come upon his brother. But when the truth was made manifest to him, fear gave place to a milder emotion; and a full sense of the magnitude of Larry's self-sacrificing affection absorbed every other feeling, and his eyes glistened with tears—tears of gratitude and love. It was some time before he could articulate, and when he did speak, he addressed himself to me.—“Mr. Doveton,” said Michael Moore, “do persuade my kind-hearted brother to think a little more of himself.”

“Oh!” cried Larry, “I'm quite safe; ‘Naught's never in danger,’ says the proverb. It's not worth Fortune's while to spite *me*.”

“Oh! yes, it is, Larry,” replied Michael.—“Now, pray, pray, return directly,” and he wiped the blood from his brother's face, as he spoke.—“Do take care of yourself, and suffer our mother to bandage your poor head. Look, here she comes after you, with Ella;—now, go back, and meet her on the way, whilst I go on with the horse, lest you get into a scrape with Mr. Euston.”

Larry and I returned towards the cottage, whilst

Michael led the horse up the hill. Mrs. Moore and Ella soon met us—the former pale as a ghost, her eyes full of tears, and her lips quivering convulsively—the latter trembling all over with anxiety, and looking as though she would have fallen to the earth, but for the sustaining hand of her mother.

“My son! my beloved!” cried the widow Moore,—“your heedlessness will break my heart.—What sudden madness has seized upon you?—You rush to your own undoing—you will bleed to death;—you are faint already—I see it—with loss of blood;—lean on me. Now tell me, my boy, do you not feel faint?”

“Why, to tell you the truth, mother, I do feel rather sick,” replied Lawrence; “but only think of Michael’s rashness, in mounting that horse, Trumpeter!”

“My son,” interrupted the widow Moore,—“my son, I am thinking of *you*!”

In a few minutes, we had taken up our old position in the garden. Lawrence Moore knelt down at his mother’s feet, and his wound was soon dressed and bandaged, with a dexterity that would not have disgraced a professional disciple of Æsculapius. When the operation had been fully performed, Larry seated himself on the low stool, which had lately been occupied by Michael.—“Thank you, mother,” said the grateful boy;

“but you have yet one thing more to do, before your work will be complete.”

“And what is that, my boy?”

“To thank the brave gentleman who has saved the life of your son ;” and, as he said this, he laid one hand upon his mother’s wrist, and pointed with the other at me.

There was a book lying upon the ground, at my feet. It was the volume which Mrs. Moore had been reading, when Larry and I entered the garden. I stooped down for the ostensible purpose of picking up the book, but in reality to conceal my emotion. The title-page lay open before me ; it was Jeremy Taylor’s *Holy Living and Dying*.

I cannot go on with this chapter. The day on which these events happened was the first of a new hegyra—an hegyra of happiness and love.

CHAPTER X.

NATURE OUTRAGED BY THE MAN WITHOUT A
HEART.

“ Spawn, weeds and filth, a leprous scum
 Made the running rivulet thick and dumb,
 And at its outlet flags huge as stake
 Damm'd it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.

* * * * *

The sensitive plant like one forbid
 Wept * * * *

SHELLY.

It was nearly five o'clock when I reached home, six was the dinner hour appointed, and my brother Walter had not yet arrived. This latter circumstance created not a little surprise; for it had been positively ascertained on the preceding day that the mail changed horses at the Globe Inn, Merryvale, exactly ten minutes before four; and as the landlord of the said inn had received orders to have a chaise in readiness, awaiting the arrival of the

mail, there was no reason on earth why "the Captain," as my mother called him, should not have made his appearance at Meadowbank, fifteen minutes after four at the latest, allowing for the turnpike and the hill.

"Perhaps he has been taken ill," said my mother, whose maternal solicitude called up visions of scarlet fever, small pox, and cholera morbus.

"Or may be the chaise has broken down," said Fanny, which caused my brother Arthur to laugh aloud, and to cry "What fun if it has!"

"What's that?" asked my sister Fanny, lifting up her streaming eyes from the second volume of *Vivian Grey*, "What's that about Walter Doveyton? Perhaps he has been shot in a duel."

"More likely he can't get a place in the coach," said Arthur, making the most rational conjecture that had been hazarded by any one of the party.

"It's no use guessing," continued my mother; "it is plain that he's not here, and it's time for me to go and dress. How provoking!—a quarter past five, and no Walter. If we put off dinner it will be spoiled, and the cook from Merry-vale will be out of temper; and I'm getting rather hungry myself—and one hates waiting so for one's dinner; and it isn't the same here as in London, where one can hire a lot of caricatures to keep one's guests in good spirits; and the Hawkinses are such punctual people, they're sure to be here before the time,

and the Eustons—hark, Arthur, my love, don't you hear something like carriage-wheels?"

"Yes, Mummy, yes,"—replied Arthur, and he ran out into the garden, singing as loud as he could,

" See the conquering hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;"

whilst his doating mother screamed after him, "Take your hat, Arthur; take your hat"—an admonition which always accompanied one of these sudden transits of Arthur, and which Arthur, with singular regularity, made a point of always disregarding.

It was plainly enough my brother Walter. The old chaise came rattling up to the door with Arthur for a running footman. The glasses were up, and, when the vehicle stopped, the traveller appeared to be in no hurry whatever to lower them. The post-boy dismounted; and Arthur stood in readiness to let down the steps of the chaise, whilst my mother and sisters blocked up the door-way, fluttering with nervous excitement, and wondering whether Walter was much altered, since last they had the felicity of seeing him.

"He's asleep sure enough," cried Arthur, winking his eye at the post-boy as he spoke.

But just as he had said this a rustling, and then a rumbling, noise was heard to issue from the

chaise; the window was suddenly lowered, and a large black dog of the setter breed leaped out, with a loud yell, and came sprawling over poor Arthur, with a violence, which nearly knocked him down.

Presently another canine head, and then a human one, appeared at the window. Arthur, who speedily recovered from his astonishment at being thus embraced by proxy, stood forward and opened the door of the carriage, making a spring at the same time, which would have lodged him safely in the interior of the vehicle, a situation which he much coveted that he might be the first to welcome his brother; but unfortunately just at the very moment that he was "in the suspended impulse of his lightness," the dog, whose head had appeared at the window, the very counterpart of the first intruder, bounced out of the chaise, with a cry of exultation, and came violently in contact with poor Arthur, who was borne down bodily by this unlooked-for collision, and stretched spread-eagle-wise on the ground.

My mother uttered a faint shriek, and rushed forward to raise her fallen favourite. But before she reached him, Arthur was again upon his legs, and shaking the captain, who by this time had followed the example of his dogs, very cordially by both his hands, shouting out, "How do, Watty? glad to see you, old fellow—brought your pistols,

eh?—fine dogs, rather too familiar—have it out of them some day—just wont I, Watty, my boy!”

But “Watty” seemed in no wise disposed to return the cordiality of his brother. He looked at Arthur with an affectation of wonderment, and withdrawing his hands with all possible speed as though there had been danger in the fraternal contact, he drawled out, the tones of his voice resembling those of a French dancing-master,

“Boy, who are you?”

“Who am I?—well that’s a good one—I am Arthur, and (imitating ‘the captain’) I have the honour—to be—your brother.”

“Brother” returned Walter, fixing his glass in in the corner of his eye, or rather, to speak more distinctly, screwing it up between the brow and the nose, and surveying Arthur from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, as he spoke—“Brother—ah! to be sure, my brother—how do?”

There was nothing at all to be wondered at in the loud roar of laughter, which burst from Master Arthur’s lungs, when he heard these last words of the captain’s. Walter still continued scrutinizing his brother; and Arthur said to him, when his laughter had expired,—

“Well, Watty, my dear boy, what do you think of me?—Not so bad-looking, am I?—for a brother. Mummy says that I’m a beauty—don’t think she’ll say that of you.”

Arthur was quite correct in this instance ; for Walter was no beauty. Unless indeed five feet six, and a face very much like a monkey's, make beauty; which, I think, they do not; and such were the main attributes of the captain.

By this time my mother and sisters had congregated around poor Walter, and very disconcerted was he, when he found that not only his two hands, but his lips, were speedily laid under tribute by the fair candidates for his 'favour and affection.'—"How do, ma'am; how do, ladies?" drawled the captain, when his lips were disengaged;—"Hope I have the pleasure to find you well,—and Mr. Doveton, too.—I don't see the governor,—hope nothing the matter.

"In the study, Walter," replied my mother: "but what on earth has made you so late."

"So late, madam——."

"Well that's good," exclaimed Arthur; "if he don't *madam* his mother, as though he were talking to the queen."

"Late, madam!" continued the captain: "you don't mess till seven I suppose; and as yet it is hardly six."

"Indeed, Walter, but we dine at six,—we keep early hours in the country,—a little primitive or so may be," (*four* was our usual dinner hour), "but you will soon get used to these barbarisms. When at Rome, Walter, you know,—but it is high

time to dress for dinner,—we have a party;—the fact is, my dear boy, we expected you a quarter past four. Mail sets you down at the *Globe* ten minutes exactly before;—and then taking the hill into consideration, five-and-twenty minutes for the three miles.—Hope the chaise was ready for you, Walter?”

“Quite, ma’am—chaise at the door,” drawled Walter; “but just as I was going to step in, I heard a rattling and rolling in one of the upstairs rooms, and I said to myself, ‘There’s bilyard’s, (it was thus that he always pronounced *billiards*), so I walked up, and saw two fellows playing abominably bad, and then I had a turn with the marker. Thinks I, a bad specimen of Merry-vale, —never saw such a table in my life.”

I could not help thinking that my brother Walter had a method, peculiar to himself, of testifying the strength of his affection towards the different members of his family. Perhaps my mother thought the same, for she walked off to dress for dinner, directly Walter had finished the history of his game at ‘bilyards.’ Upon this ‘the captain’ began to whistle to his dogs, and the sooty quadrupeds having previously destroyed three geraniums, a fucia, and a bantam, came bounding up to their master, paying first of all their compliments to him, and then to my two sisters respectively.

"Oh! the beast," cried Laura, in an agony,—
 "he has dirtied my new habit-shirt."

"La! poor thing," exclaimed Fanny,—*"it is only the exuberance of his ecstasy. I doat on dogs,—big dogs in particular; for they always make me think of Lord Byron's inscription on his favourite Newfoundland :*

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
 Unknown to glory,—

And — and — *so on*, with the noble burst of
 misanthropy at the end—

To mark a friend's remains, these stones have risen,
 I never knew but one—and these are his'n.

As Walter had no taste for poetry, he turned aside to "settle" with the post-boy; and having done this, he entered the house and encountered me standing in the hall.

I had contemplated with mingled feelings of disappointment and disgust the scene that had been acting before me. I was disappointed, for I expected to find in Walter the manly bearing, the ingenuous frankness, and the over-running enthusiasm, which my boyish imagination had set down as the generic qualities of the military character. I fully expected to have seen my brother leap from the vehicle that brought him to Meadow-bank, with open arms and eyes bright with joy, in what Fanny would call "the exuberance

of his ecstasy;" but instead of this, after a reasonable delay, which made me think that Walter's "fashionable arrival" had been superintended by the deity Morpheus, he crept forth with a languid air and an aspect of sovereign indifference, and received the cordial embraces of his family, with a coldness which, whether it were genuine or assumed, made me shudder and turn quite sick with feelings which I will not attempt to analyze.

Walter met me in the hall and accosted me.—"Ah! my other brother.—How do, Sir?—my brother. Ge—Ge—Ge—ch? Gerald."

God forgive me, but the answer I returned was full of bitterness. I said to Walter—"No, no, no,—not your brother,—I think not your brother,—certainly not, Sir,—not your brother."

"A cousin may be then," returned Walter,— "at home for the Midsummer holidays;" and he passed on, leaving me alone with the reflection that I had expended my indignation to no purpose, and that my reproaches were utterly stingless, thus pointed against the obtuseness of my brother.

Then I repaired to the summer-house, which was my favourite retreat, being one of which no one envied me the possession: there I stretched myself on a rudely fashioned bench, and abandoned myself to my teeming reflections.

It is not my intention to inflict upon the reader a detailed account of those reflections, but I particularly remember to have soliloquized in language somewhat similar to this:—"I have seen to-day the two extremes of humanity,—the two extremes of nature and of art. The one has enraptured, the other has disgusted me. I wish that I had been born a shepherd. We pay dearly for high civilization, when we sacrifice every genuine impulse of the heart,—when we give truth, which is gold, in exchange for conventionalities, which are tinsel. I think that one Larry, or one Michael Moore, is worth a whole regiment of Walter Dovetons."

CHAPTER XI.

THE STRONG MAN HELPING THE WEAK.

The earth-voice of the mighty sea
Whispering how meek and gentle it can be."

WORDSWORTH.

" How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue. * *
Madly they frustrate still their own designs."

SHELLEY.

I LAY some time in the summer-house, for my meditations, becoming more and more confused, at length terminated in a dreamy slumber, from which I was aroused by a noise resembling a "view halloa." I started up, and soon discovered that it was almost dark: I felt somewhat chill, for the damps of evening had been falling around me, and I was but partially removed from their

influence. Somebody stood before me; but I could not distinguish the face of the visitant.

Presently I heard a voice, saying,—“ Well, Jerry, my boy—been napping; eh, my fine fellow? That’s what I call somewhat unsociable; but as the mountain would not go to Mahomet, you know—Come, jump up, and join the party in the drawing-room.”

It was Reginald Euston. A fine young fellow was Sir Willoughby’s eldest son. He was about five-and-twenty, tall, and well-proportioned, with an open, rubicund countenance, bright eyes, black hair and copious whiskers to match. His face beamed with good nature and good health. My father called him “a proper young gallant,” and my sister Laura was in love with him.

“ Come along,” continued Mr. Euston,—“ I missed you—all dinner time I was thinking, what can have become of Gerard; so I left the dining-room, with half my quantum of wine, to go in search of you, and lo! I have, at length, discovered the lost sheep.”

I thought all this very strange. Few had ever sought me before. I felt grateful, though I scarcely knew for what; and I said, in a low, melancholy voice, “ I did not think that any one would miss me. My absence generally occasions more satisfaction than regret.”

“ Does it?” exclaimed Reginald Euston—

"no, no, boy, I can't believe that. There is Arthur, he is every one's delight;—if Arthur, why then not you?"

"Oh! I am very different from Arthur. We are not fashioned of the same clay. Nothing is too good for Arthur, nothing too bad for me. But it is strange that you should have missed me: how very kind in you to think of one, whom every body else forgets. I am very grateful, Mr. Euston, very grateful indeed, I am so unused to kind words, that yours will not soon be forgotten."

"You are a very strange boy," returned my companion;—I scarcely know what to make of you. I came here to thank you, and, instead of this, you express your gratitude towards me. I don't know that I have done any-thing for you; but it is very certain, that you have done me a service which I shall not easily be enabled to repay."

"I do you a service?"

"Yes, my boy—a very great one. Was it not you who saved my Trumpeter this morning, and the neck of young Larry Moore?"

"Oh yes; but I could not well have done otherwise. I merely gave the bridle a jerk."

"You are a brave fellow, and a modest one. I like you. You are too good for such——" then he checked himself, and continued—"but, come in, and you and I will have a game at *ecarté*."

“Thank you,” said I, “but I would rather go to bed. I am not wanted in the drawing-room. Perhaps, I am vain and silly; but I hate to have sharp words spoken to me at all times, and they are terrible in the presence of strangers.”

Reginald Euston seated himself on the bench beside me, and took one of my hands into his own. “Then,” said he, “if you will not come with me, I will stay with you, Master Gérard.”

The tears stole down my cheeks, and I felt glad that it was almost dark. There was exceeding kindness in the tones of Mr. Euston’s voice, as he addressed me—it was not the kindness of a patron, but of a friend, and I valued it accordingly. I had often heard him converse, but never in such language, or in such a voice, until now.

“No, sir—no, Mr. Euston—it is damp and cold, you had better go in; besides—besides”—

“Besides what?”

“Every body will miss *you* from the drawing-room.”

“Of course they will, because I am the son of Sir Willoughby Euston, Baronet, of Fox Hall, in the county of * * *”—and he said this in a sneering voice, indicative of supreme contempt.

“Oh! no,” said I, “for your own sake”—

“For the sake of the broad acres, which will some day be mine—Do you know,” he continued, in a playful voice, “I am a person of some im-

portance in the county. Your mother likes to have me at her parties, and Miss Laura sets her cap at me, I see—and your brother—by the bye, that brother of your's is rather a strange fish."

"What, Arthur?"

"No—the Captain, as they call him—Now, I'll tell you what; we'll go in together, and have some fun, Gerard—at the risk of a little rudeness, I'll pay all my attentions to you. I'll take great pains to amuse you, talk to no one else, agree with every thing you say, and praise you up to the skies. You say that you are neglected—it shall not be so to night. 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' I will make you, in five minutes, of more consequence than any one in the room, and make certain persons die with envy, if you will but assist me in this plot. I say this at the hazard of being thought self-conceited;—but I cannot help seeing that all your family, save yourself, think no little of being noticed by me—an humble individual as I am: well, what say you to the scheme?"

"I do not like it; and I'll tell you why. At present I am only neglected: if you cause me to be envied, I shall be hated."

"Think again, Gerard."

I did think again, and unfortunately I thought of the last unkind words, which had wounded me: I thought of my mother's frowns and my sisters'

sneers, and my father's look of cold indifference ; and a desire, which I had never known before, took possession of me, and I ceased to remember any longer that it became me to forbear.

The offer that had been made to me was tempting. I was not without vanity, for sensitive minds are generally vain ; and the constant mortification of this vanity, which attended my neglected condition, was not the least of the sufferings I endured. I had been despised ; and now an opportunity presented itself of proving that I was not so despicable in the eyes of all people, as in those of my own family. I thought that I was now about to achieve a victory over my mother and my sisters ; and the feelings with which I anticipated this triumph were as unworthy as the triumph was worthless. I exulted, but there was a greater leaven of vanity than of vindictiveness in my exultation. I desired not to humble others so much as to exalt myself.

“ Well, my boy, have you thought again ?—second thoughts, you know, are always best.”

“ Yes ; and I have made up my mind to do according to your suggestions. Let us go in ; but, first of all, I must adorn myself.”

“ Well—be quick ; in the meantime I will saunter about the garden.—Would that I were a poet, Gerard, to apostrophize the rising moon.”

I went into the house, and, taking a hand-lamp

which some one had left upon a slab in the hall, I bounded up stairs, and was soon at the top of the house; and in the attic, which was my dormitory, I donned my best apparel, and washed myself, and did all that I was able to do for the enhancement of my natural comeliness. I sprinkled water upon my hair, and combed it until it curled all over, for it happened to be unwontedly long, and it wanted but little persuasion to dispose itself into clustering ringlets; and when I had done this, I descended;—but I paused opposite the door of my mother's chamber, and I entered,—smile not, reader, at my vanity,—to survey myself from head to foot in the full-length mirror which stood there, and my survey was satisfactory. I chuckled, as I said to myself, “The poor, despised, unloved boy is not quite destitute of beauty.” My cheeks were flushed with excitement, and my eyes glistened with the anticipation of triumph; and I drew myself up to my full height, and I expanded my chest, and I practised a smile, and I felt that even I, Gerard Doveton, might some day aspire to be loved.

I joined Reginald Euston in the garden. We entered the house together, and as we were passing through the hall, he stopped to scrutinise my altered appearance. “By Jove, Gerard!” said he, “you are better-looking than Arthur now; and as for Walter, he's a perfect fright. I'll be

hanged, if you ar'n't the beauty of the family, whatever Mrs. Doveton may think. I'll back you at even against the field.—Even on Gerard, and no takers.—Now for it, my boy !”

We entered the drawing-room, Mr. Reginald Euston leaning upon my shoulder in the most affectionate manner imaginable, and looking as much pleased as if he had just won a steeple-chase upon Trumpeter.

There were several persons assembled in the drawing-room;—indeed, all our visitors had arrived. The gentlemen, after a repetition of summonses, had just deserted their wine to join the tea-and-coffee-drinking assembly, which consisted of the ladies who had dined with us, and those less-favoured individuals who had only been invited “to come in the evening.” My mother was sitting on the sofa, between two elderly ladies, from whose vicinage she seemed anxious to escape, casting every now and then an uneasy look towards the door, as though she were expecting the entrance of some very important personage. My brother Walter was lounging upon an ottoman, after a very lack-a-daisical fashion, and playing with a cup-and-ball, as though there were none in the room at all worthy of his notice. My sister Fanny had made a “dead set” at poor Mr. Wilfred Euston, a young gentleman, much unlike his brother, of a pale, consumptive, studious appear-

ance, who was destined for holy orders, or more probably for an early grave; whilst Laura was being bored to death by Dr. Croaker, the parson of our parish, whose favourite text was, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity, saith the Preacher."

Two hired waiters, from Merry-vale, were bustling about, coffee-room fashion, with cups of tea, sugar, cream, biscuits, and such like appurtenances. Everybody looked uncomfortable, and my poor father quite wretched.

The entrance of Mr. Euston and myself created, as was intended, a sensation. My mother, who had flattered herself that I was safely in bed before this, and had replied to all inquiries concerning me, that the "dear child" was not very well, looked astounded when I entered the drawing-room with Mr. Euston leaning on my shoulder. We advanced into the centre of the room, and then, my companion watching me as earnestly as though his life had depended upon my behaviour, with all possible grace, I glided away from him, and passing from one person to another, I welcomed all my mother's guests, my face radiant with smiles, and my manner full of animation. I had some kind speech, or some solicitous question, for every one; and several of the ladies kissed me, and called me their "sweet boy,"—for ladies, and young ladies in particular, are very fond of caressing children; and when I returned to Mr. Euston,

he whispered into my ear, "Bravo!" and, placing his arm again on my shoulder, he began earnestly to converse with me.

I made some inquiries relative to the Moores, and he told me all that he knew of their history; then, in turn, he put some questions to me, concerning school, and my master, and my school-fellows, and — which astonished me more than all — my studies. He seemed to be a good scholar, and he dwelt earnestly upon the advantages resulting from a classical education. Then he asked me if I had formed any friendship at school. "I ask not," said he, "whether you have any *friends*, but whether you have *a* friend. *Friends* are only acquaintances; but 'a divine friend, by God's appointment,' as Plato, or some other philosopher, calls it, is like a winner of the St. Leger,—you are lucky if you own one in your life."

To this speech, so characteristic of the man, half philosopher, and half sportsman as he was, I made answer, "Yes, Mr. Euston, I think that I do possess a friend in a boy of the name of Hawker."

My brother Walter, who was lounging close beside us, now hearing the name of Hawker, lifted up his languid head, and drawled out, "Ah! Hawker—dare say the son of the Colonel.—Best shot in all England,—wrote the 'Advice to young

Sportsmen,'—great friend of mine,—capital fellow, and all that sort of thing."

"Mr. Doveton," said Reginald Euston, turning towards my brother, and pinching my ear as he spoke; "may I ask, Sir,—I beg you pardon,—whether Major Longbow belongs to your regiment."

"Longbow!—no, not in ours,—two Majors, Crosby and Drake,—don't remember name in the army list,—may be, has sold out."

"Probably," replied Mr. Euston, turning away to conceal his mirth; for there was something extremely ludicrous in the obtuseness of my brother Walter.

"Don't take at all," he continued in an under tone,—“one would have thought that 'twas plain enough; almost as plain as his face, and yet not intelligible to the captain."

At this moment, my mother approached us, with a pack of cards in her hand. First of all she looked a few daggers at me, and then putting on one of her blindest smiles, for the benefit of Mr. Reginald Euston, she said, in a most insinuating voice, "I hope that you will honour the whist-table. Will you favour me by drawing a card that we may see who has the luck to be your partner."

"Thank you, Mrs. Doveton," returned the son-

and-heir of Sir Willoughby Euston, Bart. ;—" but you can make up a table I'm sure without such a bungler as myself. (Mr. Euston was a first-rate whist-player.) Besides, I have promised to play a rubber of *ecarté* with Gerard ;" and saying this he put his arm around my neck and passed his fingers through my hair.

If a look—as certain lady-novellists express themselves, and such expressions are called forcible ;—if a look could kill, I should have fallen at that moment a corpse at my mother's feet. But as looks are very harmless weapons, I had no difficulty in retaining my perpendicular, though my mother actually *glared* at me, as she said, her voice tremulous with passion,—“ With that boy ! *ecarté* with that boy !—he can't play *ecarté*, Mr. Euston.”

“ Can't he play, ma'am ?”

“ Never played in his life.”

“ Then I shall have the pleasure of teaching him.”

“ He is unteachable.”

“ No,” said Mr. Euston, with a thorough-bred air of politeness ; “ if your son learns to play cards as quickly as he learns Latin, I'll answer for it that he soon beats his master.”

“ I hope you may find it so,” said my mother.

“ I am sure that I shall, Mrs. Doveton. Did ever such a head as that—” and Mr. Euston lifted up the curls which partly concealed the ex-

panse of my forehead."—Did ever such a head as that belong to an unteachable boy?"

This was too much for my mother. She walked away in an ill-concealed passion, and had it not been for her assembled visitors, she would have thrown herself upon one of the sofas and cried for very vexation.

I pitied her; but Mr. Euston seemed satisfied with the effect produced by his machinations. He smiled, and took me by the hand, and led me to an open card table. "Now," said he, taking up a pack and casting out the superfluous cards, "I will explain to you in a few moments the principles of this simple game," and then he went on with his explanations, until he was satisfied that I fully understood them, and forthwith the rubber was commenced.

I won the first game and lost the second, and fortune seemed to favour us both in almost an equal degree. I thought that the ingenuity of man could not have invented a more uninteresting diversion, but as *ecarté* was only the means whereby I was to accomplish a certain end, I continued playing with all my might, and pretending to be much edified. My sister Laura stood by, a much-interested spectator of the game, thinking that in common civility, Mr. Euston must ask her to "take a hand;" but she was disappointed: at the conclusion of each game, she looked beseech-

ingly at my partner to no purpose;—her heart fluttered, and then again was still, and she watched Mr. Reginald's every motion, and she offered to bet against him, and she did all that she could to assure him that she very much wished to play; but her hints were unavailing,—her efforts profitless. Mr. Euston would have nothing to say to her. Those two charming words "I propose," were not destined to be addressed to Miss Laura.

Not far from our card-table sate Fanny and Mr. Wilfred Euston. They were talking about Lord Byron's poetry; and Fanny, in her Arcadian phraseology, was extolling the "melodious sublimity," as she called it, of Childe Harold. I do not quite think that her criticisms would have made the fortune of the *Edinburgh Review*, in the "palmy days" of Jeffery and Hazlitt, but they were uttered with such emphasis and volubility, that had you only caught a word here and there, you might have thought that a De Staël was speaking.

I did not pay much attention to this dialogue until it happened that, whilst my partner was dealing, I caught the words "noble burst of misanthropy," and remembering that I had heard the expression in the morning, I immediately registered it in my mind as one of my sister's pet phrases.

"Can anything," said my sister Fanny,—“can

anything that has evaporated, or, rather emanated from the intellect of man, compare with that noble burst of misanthropy in the third Canto of *Childe Harold* :—

‘ I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of those high mountains and the hum
Of human cities torture me to be
Classed among creatures ;’ —

and so on. You remember the passage, Mr. Wilfred,—beautiful!—quite worthy, is it not, of the creative genius of a master-mind?”

Poor Wilfred Euston smiled, and it was wonderful that he laughed not out-right, at the tremendous *hash* my sister had made of this ill-fated stanza of the “Pilgrimage.” I felt that she was talking great nonsense, and thinking to rebuke her, I said, “It appears to me, after all, that there is nothing *very* noble in misanthropy.”

“You are a foolish child, and know nothing about it,” replied my sister Fanny, with a toss of her head;—“what should a baby like you know about Lord Byron’s poetry?”

“I know,” said I, quoting one of the *memorabilia* of my friend John Smith, “that his philosophy, at all events, is odious.”

I know not what Fanny would have replied to this, if Reginald Euston had not laid down his cards and said, “I rather think, Miss Doveton, that your brother is quite correct in his estimate

of Lord Byron's philosophy. There is *nothing* noble in misanthropy. It is noble to love, not to hate,—to seek, not to shun your fellows,—to withhold your sympathies from none, but to suffer them readily to flow over all. The wisdom of moroseness, and the nobility of hatred I have never been able to comprehend. I acknowledge my dullness in this respect, but I have escaped the Byron distemper, and have never turned down my shirt-collars, nor puled about the miseries of life, nor levelled a broad curse at humanity, nor denied my God for effect. All these things may be deemed worthy of imitation, but for my part I think that they are better eschewed. Give me cheerfulness and content for my wheel-horses,—love and faith for my leaders, and I'll answer for it that nothing will pass me along the high-road of life:—Give me such a team as this, I say, and if the Byron Mail beats me, I'll be——" here he pulled up short, and remembering that he was speaking to a lady, he checked the incipient oath, and continued, "I'll be well content to never mount the coach-box again."

Having said this, Mr. Euston took up his cards, and looking significantly at me, he put the question, "Do you propose?" to which I responded, "Four," and the game of *ecarté* was continued.

We had not played very long before my mother, who had just "cut out" of the whist-table,

came up with my sister Laura to remind Mr. Euston of a promise that he made to join them in a gipsy-party to an old ruin, about six miles distant from Merry-vale. "Remember that to-morrow is the day," said both the ladies in a breath;—"we start at one, and lunch at the Abbey.—I hope to goodness that it will be fine."

"So do I, for I like pic-nics," returned Reginald, and Laura's face brightened up as he said so.—"By the bye, Gerard, how do *you* go?—Mrs. Doveton, what seat in what carriage have you allotted to this fine boy of yours?"

"To him!" replied my mother,—"to Gerard? we have no room for him at all."

"I am glad of that," said Reginald Euston.

"Are you?" said both the ladies.

"Yes, *very*—and I'll tell you why,—I shall have my team out to-morrow, or as ladies usually call it, my 'carriage-and-four,' Mrs. Doveton,—and I will call here for Gerard, punctually at one, unless he would like better to breakfast with me at the Hall, and look over Sir Willoughby's collection of stuffed birds, which Audubon says is the best in the kingdom. I think that *would* be the wisest plan; and I will send one of the boys with little Fairy, in the morning, to Meadowbank that you may ride up to the Hall.—You are not afraid, Gerard,—are you?—of trusting your neck to my coachmanship, and of sitting beside me on

the box, for I shall take no inside passengers to-morrow, save and except a few hampers of prog, and a little champagne for the ladies."

To this I could make no answer, for my heart was exceeding full. I looked at Mr. Euston, and then at my mother, and then my head drooped, and my eyes swam with tears, and I just contrived to falter out, "Thank you;" and then, with a last desperate effort to conceal the intensity of my emotion, I threw down a whole pack of cards, and suddenly disappeared beneath the table.

This stratagem was crowned with success: when I had collected the *disjecta membra* of the ecarté pack, and had wiped my streaming eyes and swallowed down my rising tears, I felt more calm, and again appearing above the table, I saw that my mother and Laura had departed to the other extremity of the room.

I asked Mr. Euston if he would accompany me into the adjoining room, and take some slight refreshment,—a glass of wine, or lemonade, or milk-punch; as the evening was oppressively warm, and I was quite faint with extreme thirst, and almost in a state of fever produced by over-excitement, I rejoiced when he accepted my invitation. My mother had gained her point, as indeed she generally did, and the refreshments *were* laid out in the study. When we entered, my father was

there ; he was standing by a side-table and pouring out a tumbler full of wine. He did not observe our entrance : there was no one else in the room, and I saw him gulp down this *magnum* of Madeira, not indeed as a drunkard swills the much-loved beverage, but as a sick man pours down the medicine, which is destined to alleviate his malady. My father's malady was extreme dejection ; and I thought that he was resorting to a vinous stimulant for an access of artificial strength to carry him through the miseries of the evening. And so it was,—for my father's melancholy was of a nature that is cherished, not stifled, by the contemplation of surrounding gaiety ; glad faces, festive attire, the mere aspect of a social congregation awakened many painful memories, reminding him too keenly of what had been, and, worse still, of what ought to be.

“Ah ! Mr. Euston,” said my father, “I am glad that one of my boys is taking care of you. I ought to have done this myself, but indeed, Mr. Euston, you see in me a being like Shakspeare's *Lear*,

“A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man.”

I have no energies ; you must lay my neglect to the score of debility, not of rudeness. Do not conceive that I affect you not, because my tongue is silent and limbs idle.—Mr. Euston, bear with

me and my infirmities ;"—and having said this, before Reginald could reply, my poor father had quitted the room.

"The governor is dreadfully low to-night," said Mr. Euston, as he sipped his lemonade.

"Thus is it always with him," said I ;—"alas ! for my poor father."

When we returned to the drawing-room, I saw that the card-party was broken up. My mother was trying to look amiable, but it was plain that her face wore a mask. She was uneasy and unhappy ; for it was scarcely ten o'clock, and her guests were beginning to look tired. They would not amuse themselves, and she did not know how to amuse them. The conversation, or rather the *talk*, for it deserved no more dignified name, flagged awfully ; and the room was very hot, and the candles gave a bad light, and Walter had gone out to smoke a cigar in the summer-house, and Arthur, who would not go to bed, had fallen asleep on the sofa, and no one would ask Fanny to sing, though lights had been placed on the piano ; and, altogether, things were out of joint, and the party was likely to prove a failure.

My mother and my sisters looked so distressed, that I not only pitied them most cordially, but I actually began to upbraid myself for having, in some degree, assisted towards their discomfiture. I have always derived more anguish from the con-

temptation of another's failure, than from a sense of failure in myself. I have often failed, but 'the punishment of an unaccomplished purpose' has never weighed heavily upon me: I always say, "I have been vanquished this time, but I am determined that my next effort shall be victorious;" and then I begin to *act*. But when others fail, I can only look on, and think what may be their sufferings, and magnify those sufferings in my imagination, until I am quite wretched; and thus was it upon the present occasion, that I regarded my mother's failure with feelings of intolerable anguish; and I am convinced that I suffered more keenly than she suffered, albeit I could read much wretchedness upon her brow.

The exclusive attention that Reginald Euston paid to me was one of the main sources of her discomfort. My sister Laura, under the auspices of her mother, had made a most elaborate toilet; and they had purposely invited no other spinsters to be of their party, that my sisters might be quite certain of engrossing the two Messieurs Euston. But it so happened, that my provoking appearance, at the very commencement of the campaign, rendered all their schemes miserably abortive; and Laura's new dress and new hunting song, which she had got up expressly for the occasion, to captivate the eye and ear of Mr. Euston, were, through my agency, entirely thrown away; and I

could not help upbraiding myself for having conduced to poor Laura's disappointment.

My sister Fanny's *Album* was produced, and then Laura's portfolio. These magnets—for our guests were *in extremis*,—had the effect of attracting five or six people to a round table in the middle of the room. This was a sort of forlorn hope, and it was crowned with a partial success. The drawings, which were by no means first-rate, were handed about from one to another; and as the epithets "beautiful," "charming," and "lovely," were being applied to each picture in succession, the clouds began to roll away from my mother's brow, and Laura's eyes to brighten up afresh. But, alas! their delight was evanescent; for just as Dr. Croaker had pronounced one of Laura's Holy Families to be "splendid," and "fit for an altar-piece, only rather too small," the door was seen to open, and a figure, which, if it had been a pale-faced spectre, could not have stricken my poor mother with more intense consternation, was seen to approach the table.

It was one of our maid-servants—a stout-limbed Devonshire lass—and, with a heavy tread, she bounced up to the table, beside which my mother was standing. It was an awful moment; Mrs. Doveton turned pale, whilst the girl, quite unconscious of the agony she was inflicting, extended a large red hand, which clutched a small blue-and-

white teacup ; then she uttered, in her own peculiar dialect, certain words, which caused my mother's face to work convulsively, and to grow livid with passion, whilst Mr. Euston raised his handkerchief to stifle an incipient burst of laughter, and an almost universal smile was to be seen on the countenances of our assembled guests. And what were those dread words ?—" If you please, ma'am, the tea for the washerwoman !"

CHAPTER XII.

REACTION.

“ Oh ! those are bitter tears
Which the remembrance of an unkind act,
Or e'en an unkind word perhaps not meant,
A harsh tone, or a wrath-bespeaking look
Calls into being——” MS.

“ *If you please, ma'am, the tea for the washer-woman !*”—How laughter-moving, and yet how terrific, was the effect produced by these few words. There was something to a common spectator irresistibly ludicrous in the whole scene—the half-awkward and half-impudent look of the girl, with her shining face, and red arms bare to the very shoulder—the visible consternation expressed by the distorted features of my mother, in which it would be difficult to determine whether

anger or distress were paramount—the different stratagems to which our guests had recourse, to conceal their propensities to laughter; one walking off to the window, another rivetting his eyes on the Holy Family, a third making use of his handkerchief, and a fourth letting it drop. And then the words that the girl had uttered, “suggesting dim reminiscences” of soap-suds, and fat women, and clothes hanging out to dry. Altogether, it must have been a rich treat to a spectator with a keen sense of the ridiculous.

To tell the truth, this happened to be the eve of a great wash; and as the lady, who had been hired to preside on this occasion, was expected to arrive at dawn of day, our Abigail, with a discreteness worthy of her scriptural prototype, had determined to take thought for the morrow, and to have all things in readiness awaiting the advent of the washer-woman. Nor was there any thing strange or unwonted in the embassy of the girl upon this occasion. She had often uttered the same words accompanied by a similar gesture, appealing to the same person, in the same room, and in anticipation of a similar event. She had often asked for the washer-woman’s tea, and as often had it been meted out unto her without once receiving a reprimand with it; indeed, she only fulfilled the behests of her mistress in so doing, and upon the present occasion she saw no reason, because there

was a gala in the parlour, why the washer-woman should go breakfastless in the kitchen. And she was right; but unfortunately for Susan, her mistress was of a different opinion, and a month's warning was the result of her mis-timed application for the bohea.

Yet ludicrous as was this little misadventure, I felt much more inclined to weep, than to laugh, over my mother's discomfiture. My cup was already nearly full. I felt as though nothing could relieve the weight that was pressing against my heart but a flood—an unrestrained flood—of tears. The excitement of victory was over; I had triumphed, and looking back upon my triumph, I thought that it was a very contemptible business, and that I was a contemptible being. In reality my exaltation had not afforded me one pleasurable sensation, and from the moment that I first beheld my mother's uneasiness, it had all been unmitigated pain. I was grateful for Reginald Euston's protection, and I fully estimated the excellence of his motives; but I could not co-operate any more with him; nor restrain my genuine emotions any longer. I had acted unkindly, and given pain to others, and I longed to withdraw into solitude that I might weep over my first deviation from the broad paths of forbearance and love.

So I whispered into the ear of my companion, "Indeed I can bear this no longer. Mr. Euston,

comfort my mother—and say something kind to Laura—and ask Fanny to sing. You will soon make them all happy—Good night, Mr. Euston—God bless you”—and I pressed his hand with a pressure of affection, and rose up from my seat beside him.

“You are a strange boy, Gerard—good night. I will do all that you tell me—but remember to-morrow morning; the poney shall be with you at nine.”

“Yes, God bless you, God bless you for a kind and great-hearted man!”—and I rushed out of the room unperceived by all but Mr. Reginald Euston.

I repaired to my little chamber at the summit of the house, and there I threw myself upon my bed, and gave vent to a flood of tears. Then I prayed; and when I rose up, I was strengthened, and a season of serene reflection ensued. I retraced in memory all the events of the past day, and it seemed as though I had lived many months since I shook off my morning's slumbers. I thought of the Moores, and I compared them with my own family—and the comparison was incalculably to the advantage of the humble dwellers in the cottage. My memory dwelt upon the grace and beauty of the lowly children, and my mind made many excursions into the airy realms of imagination. I thought of princes who had passed their childhood in shepherds' huts, and of high-born maidens, dwelling in obscurity, and ignorant of

their lofty lineage ; then I built up many towering castles, from the summit of which I beheld Ella Moore, no longer a peasant girl, but an Earl's daughter and my bride ; but these airy fabrics were soon dissolved, and I was again the unloved school-boy yearning after impossible things, and doomed to be the victim of disappointment. . .

CHAPTER XIII.

NATURE'S UNAMBITIOUS UNDERWOOD.

"The sweetest things that ever grew
Beside a human door."

WORDSWORTH.

"Things, such as these, are ever harbingers
To trains of peaceful images."

KEATS.

I SHALL not inflict upon the public a detailed narrative of our excursion to "the abbey;" but, in its place, will I present my readers with some account of the widow Moore and her children, being the substance of a conversation which passed upon the box of Mr. Euston's drag, that gentleman being the principal speaker, and I a much-interested listener.

Mrs. Moore was a soldier's widow. Her husband had been a gunner in the artillery—an Irishman,—whose steady conduct and superior abilities had raised him, after many years' service, to the rank of a warrant-officer. He had been a conductor, or an assistant-commissary of ordnance, during a great part of the Peninsular war, and was killed in the trenches at the taking of St. Sebastian, in 1813. Upon the interest of a small sum of money, which her husband had saved, added to the scanty government-pension which she received, the widow Moore lived, with her three children, in the cottage which I have attempted to describe.

Who or what Mrs. Moore had been, before she became the wife of the artillery-man, no one in the neighbourhood appeared to know. She had taken the cottage, in Grass-hill Lane, shortly after the peace had been declared, bringing with her three young children; and there she had dwelt ever since,—not exactly in “easy circumstances,” but in a situation above poverty, and she appeared to be contented with her lot. People said that she had seen better days, grounding their belief, I suppose, upon the superiority of her manners, the gentility of her appearance, and the accuracy—nay, indeed, the elegance—of the language which she commonly employed. When she spoke, or when she sate at work, or when she moved across

the room, you might have seen the gentlewoman so distinctly, that you could not have helped addressing her with respect. Her low, mild voice, when speaking,—her small, white hand, when working,—her dignified carriage, when moving,—all betrayed the secret of her birth. And yet there could be no doubt that she was the widow of one who had entered the army as a private, and died as a conductor of artillery.

She had dwelt many years at Grass-hill, and she had never once quitted the neighbourhood. Her children, beneath the roof of that cottage, had advanced in years and in knowledge; there was it, that they had first learned to read, to pray, to reflect. They remembered no other dwelling-place, and they clung to their little homestead with feelings of peculiar veneration. Perhaps, the elder boy, Lawrence, was the least fervent of the three in his devotion to their household-gods, for he was naturally of a truant disposition, and liberty was the aliment of his existence; but even he loved his home, and would sit for hours together by the hearth, or in the sunshine, playing with his sister's hair, or holding his brother's hand, whilst he listened to the words of some good book which his mother would read aloud, and explain, from her easy-chair. And, in sooth, when thus they were employed, it was quite beautiful to see them.

Michael Moore was unlike his brother in cha-

racter as well as in person. He was more gentle, more subdued, and of a much more thoughtful temperament. In the clear expanse of his serene forehead, and the mild lustre of his hazel eye, there was that which indicated a contemplative, and sometimes a self-concentrated mind. He spake little, but his face communed with you. He would bend his eyes fondly on his sister, and take her hand into his own, and his lips would settle into an expression of fondness; and thus would he sit, not uttering a word, until the fulness of his heart overflowed, and his eyelids were heavy with tears; and then he would throw his arms around Ella's neck, and almost stifle her with kisses. At other times, he would climb up the many-coloured hill, which rose at the back of the cottage. There he would make himself a couch of purple and yellow heath, and, baring his forehead to the summer's breeze, he would gaze around him upon the distant landscape, the blue hills, the winding river, and the far-off sea blending with the horizon, and dotted with white sails; or he would lie supine, watching the clouds as they formed themselves into grotesque figures, whilst his fancy bodied forth strange resemblances, and he beheld cities, and palaces, and giants, in the summer's sky. Never did created being more intensely enjoy his existence. With him, *to be* was to be happy;

and Michael Moore's was a wide heritage, for the great universe was his portion. He was no dreamer; he did not live, poet-like, in an imaginary world, nor fill the cup of his happiness from any invisible source, but from a fountain, a never-failing fountain, of actual and palpable delights. Were not the trees green?—were not the flowers beautiful and fragrant?—was not the air fresh, and the moss soft, and the turf elastic, and the sun warm?—Did not the birds sing to him, and the painted butterflies wanton around him, and the bees ply their tasks in his presence?—Might he not lie on the warm grass, or bathe in the cool element, or run through the thin air, and no one dispute his right to such enjoyments? Happy boy!—nature appealed not to his pure young soul in vain; nor spurned he the rich gifts which were laid at his feet, because his brethren were suffered to partake of them.

Nor was this all; for Michael Moore was not content to read only the surface of things. His was an inquiring mind: it was not enough for him to look upon the face of nature, and feel that it was very fair; he soon desired to *know*, and he began to investigate causes, and to penetrate, with a searching eye, the inner recesses of creation. Nor did he fail; for he was, indeed,

————— " One
Not doomed to ignorance, though forced to tread
From childhood up the ways of poverty,
From unreflecting ignorance preserved
And from debasement rescued ;*"

he had wisdom, not only beyond his condition, but indeed much beyond his years ; for though he had received no lessons from any other preceptor than his mother, he had learned very much from her, and retaining firmly the knowledge that he imbibed readily, his mind soon became the storehouse of much precious and varied lore. He knew nothing of languages, it is true, unless it were the language of nature ; but he could name the stars and the flowers of the field, and he knew every bird by its plumage, and could tell you the specific properties of the smallest insect that had ever excited his attention. And he had read, too, of other countries, and the history of his own land, and he had traced the courses of discoverers upon the map, and there was scarcely a place of which he knew not the situation. „Mrs. Moore had not many books, but Michael had *studied* them all ; and if I err not, to the young student a few volumes are more profitable than vast libraries. It was good for him that he could not prematurely become, as some boys do, a *helluo librorum* ; for there is much wisdom which is not in books, and

* Wordsworth's *Excursion*.

Michael Moore, circumstanced as he was, ran no risk of being seduced by the learning of human sciolists into the more than folly of closing his eyes to the wisdom of God, as unfolded in the pages of the creation. He read ; but he regarded each volume as nothing more than an imperfect commentary upon the one universal book of Nature. .

And thus he went on, from year to year, increasing in wisdom and in beauty. Time soiled not the purity of his young mind, for he imbibed no pernicious knowledge, and he mingled not with evil people. He thought, and he acted no sin ; indeed he knew nothing of its existence, excepting that he had read of its denunciation in the pages of holy writ. He had seen no crime done in his presence, for he had never wandered many miles from his homestead, and then his course had always lain in the direction of the most secluded part of the country. The rude fingers of the world had not brushed off the first bloom of his innocence ; he had never hungered after things forbidden, nor drawn one single cup of pleasure from any impure fount. In the midst of beauty and love his young soul expanded flower-like ; they were his aliment, and he was always full ; he desired no more than he possessed ; lovely and full of love himself, he was a portion of that great whole of beauty, which was the source to him of such infinite enjoyment.

Equally pure, equally full of love, equally, nay, more beautiful was Ella. Like unto her brother, in the prevailing expression, and indeed in the lineaments of her face, there was more of the seraph in her aspect; for her eyes were deep blue, as an Italian sky; and her figure so light and fragile, that when she *glided* from one place to another, you would scarce have thought that she was a material being. She was one year younger than Michael, but many years behind him in knowledge; for, although she was an apt scholar, and thoughtful withal, she had not the inquisitive mind of her brother, and she was more contented with the superficial, as woman indeed ought to be. Ella Moore was most truly maiden-like; she seemed to have an intuitive perception of all that it became girlhood to be; she never aspired beyond her proper sphere; nor suffered herself to descend below it. I have seen her when a transient ebullition of feeling has betrayed her into what she deemed an excess, shrink back as though she were frightened at her own boldness, and assume a more becoming serenity. And it was nature, not art, that restrained her; she had not been taught to school her emotions, and she knew nothing of conventional obligations; she was regulated in all that she did, by an innate sense of the beautiful and becoming, and if she had been raised from the cottage to the palace,

she would have graced her elevated situation equally with her more lowly one.

I have heard people talk of boisterous extravagance and rude exhibitions of uncontrolled feeling, and say that it is "Nature speaking out;" so it may be, but Nature has many voices, and knows as well how to whisper as to call aloud; and it whispered from Ella. It is as natural in some minds to control their emotions as it is in others to vent them; and surely it is more becoming to control them, for "*moderate passions*," as the moralist* has written, "are the most affable expressions of humanity." And all was moderation in Ella,—all was quiet,—all subdued,—all beautiful. An under-current of deep feeling flowed tranquilly on, and if it were not always inaudible, it never gave forth any sound more noisy than a gentle murmur.

But how fondly Ella loved her brothers,—how incessant were the little acts of kindness which manifested the endurance of that love! How watchful was she,—how unwearying her attentions,—how manifold her domestic charities! Small cause had she for forbearance, and little tasked was her patience, it is true, for she was cherished, even as she cherished, but she ran the race of love with unfailing strength, and it is certain that none outstripped her. Mother, brothers,

* Owen, Feltham.

sister, children, all made one great circle of love ; and perhaps there never was a home which harboured fewer unkind thoughts than that little cottage at Grass-hill.

I think that the elder boy, Larry, shared most of his mother's love. She certainly watched him more closely than she did either Michael or Ella ; but this may, and it is natural that it should, have been, because the redundancy of his animal spirits, and his excessive love of liberty, which made him often a wanderer, caused her to feel more inquietude on his account and required greater vigilance on her part, than did either of her other two children, all quiet and gentleness as they were. Indeed, Larry's restless temperament might well have awakened serious apprehensions in the breast of a less doating mother than the kind-hearted widow Moore.

There were few things which afforded Larry Moore more delight than angling in the river. Sometimes he would persuade Michael to accompany him ; but Michael, whose gentle heart revolted at the thought of inflicting pain upon the smallest sentient thing in the creation, found little that was congenial to his disposition in his brother's favourite pursuit. Yet sometimes he would so far yield to Larry's solicitations, urged as they always were with an earnestness almost irresistible, as to become the companion of his excursions

along the banks of the beautiful river, whose serpentine course lay through the neighbourhood of Grass-hill, scarce six furlongs distant from their cottage.

• But they had many miles to walk ere they reached Larry's favorite haunts, for that part of the river which watered the fields about Grass-hill, was little suited to the purpose of angling, being under the influence of the tides; and these walks were much enjoyed by Michael, for he delighted in the companionship of his brother, and moreover he knew that his presence had a restraining effect upon Larry, which prevented that thoughtless boy from committing many an unwise act, exposing him to unnecessary danger. Besides, as they went along he would stop to pick the wild-flowers in his way, and he would cull various samples of heaths and other vegetable productions, which he would carry home with him to study in the evening. And when they halted, and Larry prepared for action, he would stretch himself on the warm grass, and take out the book which he had brought with him and read, that he might manage to forget the life-destroying occupation of his brother.

But Larry was not contented with this; he wished Michael to share in his amusement, and he seemed annoyed by the great want of sympathy which his gentle-hearted brother exhibited regard-

ing this his favourite pursuit. In vain Michael, with tears in his eyes, protested that he liked not the sport,—in vain he dwelt upon his utter ignorance both of the theory and practice of fishing,—in vain he declared that his inexperience would mar his brother's chances of success. Larry urged his request most inexorably, and at length Michael was forced to succumb,—his objections being over-ruled, and his arguments invalidated by his brother.

Now Michael had not said one word about his horror of destroying life, because he thought that such an avowal would give pain to his brother without saving the animals he pitied, for Larry loved the sport too dearly to abandon it for such a reason as this.

So a rod was put into Michael's hand, and the brother-fishermen sallied forth together. But day after day passed, and Michael brought home no fish, though Larry's basket was always full, and he indeed had made a point of yielding the likeliest places to the more inexperienced angler. It was strange, for as they confined themselves to ground-bait fishing, little skill was required to ensnare the unsuspecting denizens of the river. Larry wondered, and at length, one day, when the fish were being particularly obliging to *him*, he said to Michael, "Mike, just show me what kind of bait you have on."

Michael blushed, but as there was no shirking

the question, he drew his line out of the water, and merely replied, "Look."

And Michael *did* look,—but there was no symptom of a bait,—neither worm,—nor paste,—nor caddice,—nor fly,—nor gentle, was there,—nothing but a naked piece of curvated wire, with a barb, which, to all appearance, had inflicted no torture, and shed not a single drop of blood.

Lawrence burst into a fit of laughter, and there was a roguish smile upon Michael's face.

"Well, Mike, this is capital," cried the elder brother,—“yours is certainly a new style of fishing.—Now, tell me what is it that you expect to catch with a bare hook,—a trout, or a grayling?”

"Neither, Larry,—neither," replied Michael; "I omitted the bait on purpose."

"And yet you have been fishing all the week as intently as though you expected to catch a ten-pound salmon at the least."

"It pleased you just as well," cried Michael, throwing his arms around his brother's neck, and looking beseechingly into his face, with a look, that said plainly enough, "Oh! do not ask me again."

But Larry heeded not this appealing gesture; his whole soul was in his sport; "Well, Mike," said he, "if you don't like baiting, I'll do it for you willingly enough," and as he said this he ran

off to a little brook, which flowed into the river, and raising a large stone, he took a caddice from beneath it, and returned to Michael, with the animalcula in his hand.

"Now give me the hook," said Lawrence.

"Stop; show me that animal: do you know what it is, Larry?"

"A caddice."

"And you are going to destroy it?"

"I have destroyed, as you call it, thousands."

"Have you ever seen a May-fly, Larry?"

"How can you ask?—next month, there will be millions!"

"Then let this creature live till then."•

"What do you mean?"

"Ah! I thought, Larry, that you knew nothing about the history of this caddice, or you would not be so anxious to destroy it."

"I know that the fish take 'em," returned Lawrence; "and I know where they are always to be found."

"You don't know much, then," said Michael playfully;—"but let us look at this creature together."

"As you please, Mike;" and the brothers sate down upon the grass, side-by-side;—the master and the pupil.

"Now, dear Larry, look at this animal, or rather this lifeless-looking body, which seems like a bit

of hollow reed stuck about with gravel and sand ; —next month it will be full of life, skimming about the surface of the river ;—next month, this clumsy, almost motionless mass, will flutter about as a light-winged May-fly.”

“ Indeed ! Mike ; — but you know all these things, and I’m sure that you would not deceive me.”

“ You would hardly think—would you, Larry, as you see it now,—that the creature in your hand is endowed with a very superior instinct ; and that this rude mass of straw and gravel, bears as much evidence of design in its construction as does Sir Willoughby’s grand house, with all its porticoes and pillars ?”—

“ Go on, Mike.”

“ I have read, that this creature comes from the egg a naked white worm, and that, soon after it is born, it makes for itself a covering of fine silk, keeping only its head and its legs, which are in the forepart of the body, bare. But this case is not a sufficient protection, so the creature encrusts it all over with small shells and particles of sand, which form a compact gravelly mass, sufficient for all purposes of defence—a very citadel, in fact. Now, look, Larry, and admire the ingenuity of the creature you are about to destroy.”

“ Go on, Mike ;—to hear you talk is like reading out of a book.”

Michael smiled, and, pressing his brother's hand, continued. — "But when the creature has constructed his castle in this manner, he finds that the *weight* of it is an incumbrance to him, and not being able to move about so readily as he could wish, he attaches some lighter substance, as a piece of wood, to his shell, or he enters into the hollow of a reed, or he rolls up a leaf into the shape of a little tube, and this light body serves to buoy him up, and enables him to move freely; and then he is just what you see him now, and next month he will be a May-fly."

"I should never have thought that," said Larry; — "how came you to know it, Mike?" and he looked quite astonished at the extent of his brother's information.

"Why, Larry, I am partly indebted to you for the knowledge," replied Michael; "for one day I picked up a caddice, when I was—not fishing with you, but—out with you, when fishing; and I looked at it, and I thought it a very wonderful thing; and I took it home with me, but I could not find its history in any of our books.—So I went next day to the Hall, and asked Mr. Euston's permission to find it out in his Cyclopædia, which I had more than once consulted before; and I copied the whole article, and you shall read it when we get home, for I have not

told you one-half of the wonderful properties of the caddice."

"Well, Mike, I'll be hanged, if I ever bait my hook with a caddice again."

"Thank you, Larry; you are a dear, kind brother. I told you, that I was quite sure you did not know its history, or you would not have stuck it on the hook."

CHAPTER XIV.

GLIMPSES OF LIGHT.

“Thou art sprung, too, of no ignoble birth,
Or there's no faith in instinct.”

COLERIDGE.

ON the day following our excursion to “the Abbey,” I called to inquire after Larry Moore, and I found that he was but little injured by the accident that had so lately befallen him. After this, my visits to the cottage were very frequently repeated; for the family of the Moores had excited within me an interest which seemed likely to endure; and I could plainly see that I was always most welcome, and that my visits to Grass-hill were hailed with delight by every member of the family.

But I said nothing to my own relatives of the

connection that I had thus formed, because I well knew that my visits to the cottage would be forbidden directly they were known. "And rightly too," some of my readers will say; "for social order must be preserved." Granted: but in those days, I had no other philosophy than that of love; and I thought that there was no wealth like affection, and that hearts, and not titles, made people noble and great.

It was a boyish fancy,—but I acted in accordance with it; and scarcely a day passed that did not see me descending the hill which conducted to the cottage of the widow. I will not attempt to describe the delight of which these visits were productive. Life, which had so lately been to me a dull, cheerless blank, was now bright with all the colours of the rainbow. There is no joy like the first draught of love, when we have thirsted after it for many years, until our soul has fainted within us from inanity. This is a trite common-place; but it often happens, that the feelings which are most frequently described, are those which most rarely are experienced. There are few who know what it is to ask for love, and to be denied.

I have so much that is actual to write about, that I must not dwell too tenaciously upon my feelings; but I must repeat that even at this early stage of my connexion with the Widow Moore and her family, I felt a rooted conviction in my

mind that gentle blood flowed in their veins, and that some day I should be proud of their acquaintance. Every new visit to the cottage increased the strength of this conviction. It is true that my poetical temperament was precisely of a nature to cherish such a belief, but it would not have built up an imaginative structure of this kind, had there not been a good foundation to rest upon; for I happened to be the victim of a morbid refinement, which less than any other peculiarity of mind, would have suffered me to see perfections which did not actually exist. Indeed I was so peculiarly alive to whatever was in the smallest degree unbecoming, that I had never, until I saw Michael and Ella, met with any thing approaching a realization of my dreams of perfect humanity. A harsh tone, or an ungraceful movement, or an expression in any way indecorous had often occasioned me acute pain; and more than once had such petty blemishes as these checked the growth of a new-born attachment. It must be acknowledged that such a temperament as this was much more likely to depreciate than to over-value the real excellence of the Moores; it was my misfortune to see things too clearly, but I saw little or nothing that was unbecoming, or unlovely in these simple dwellers in a cottage. If there was any lack of gentleness it was in Larry; he had less of that consummate

elegance which adorned Michael and Ella ; he was less quiet, less subdued, less thoughtful, and the exuberance of his animal spirits sometimes made him boisterous and rude. He had not the same gentleness of demeanour, and the same innate sense of the beautiful and the becoming, as was possessed by his brother and sister. Moreover—and this deficiency was the most apparent of all—the language, wherewith he clothed his ideas, was far from being either elegant or correct, whilst the common discourse of Michael and of Ella was distinguished by a purity, and indeed an elegance of style, which would not have disgraced the gentlest, the most high-born scions of the aristocracy. Perhaps it was that going oftener abroad and mingling with other young cottagers, whose manners were rude and whose language was corrupt, he caught a little of the plebeian jargon, which was constantly sounding in his ears, and his home associations, though they tempered, did not eradicate, the disease he thus imbibed : and Larry Moore had not mind enough to overcome the disadvantages of his situation.

But a little incident happened one day, shortly after I became acquainted with the Moores, which more than any thing served to establish me in the faith that I had so readily imbibed. The Widow

Moore was reading aloud to her children some passages from Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living*, which was the good woman's favorite book, when I entered the garden, and begging her to read on, I sate down and became one of her auditors. She had selected that beautiful chapter on *Contentedness* for her evening's discourse, and as she went on, now reading and now explaining what she read, I almost began to think that there was no real evil in the world, and that Shakspeare and Epictetus were right, when they said that not things, but our notions of them, are the causes of all the sufferings we endure. *

Mrs. Moore was an able commentator; and sometimes there was great force and beauty in the illustrations she employed. There was a remarkable sweetness too, in the tones of her voice; she spoke "far above singing," and I thought, as I sate there in the sun, with Ella on one side and Michael on the other, that I would be well content to spend my whole life, in listening to such beautiful words, pronounced in such beautiful accents as those which now made music in my ear, and stole into the recesses of my heart.

* *ταρασσειν τους ανθρωπους ου τα πραγματα αλλα τα περι των πραγματων δογματα*.—See the *Encheiridion* of Epictetus; the passage is almost translated by Shakspeare.—"There's nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."—*Hamlet*.

“Poverty”—thus began the Widow Moore, enunciating in her low clear voice the lovely precepts of Jeremy Taylor: “‘Poverty is better than riches, and a mean low fortune to be chosen before a great and splendid one. It is indeed despised, and makes men contemptible;’—but my children,” and here she lifted up her eyes, and laid the reverend volume on her knees—“poverty, though evil minds may condemn it, is not contemptible in itself. It is only when we strive to appear that which we are not, that we become, in reality, contemptible. A poor, yet contented man—a man who suffers not adversity to disturb the serenity of his mind, a man—let him be ever so humble, ever so trampled upon by the world—who turns a serene eye upon his misfortunes, and says meekly: ‘Thy will be done; it is good for me that I have been afflicted,’ is not only far beyond the reach of contempt, but is indeed one of the noblest spectacles to be seen in the Theatre of Nature.”

There was nothing very novel in this doctrine, but the earnestness and the apparent sincerity, with which it was declared, rendered it, indeed, most solemn and impressive. I thought of the philosophers of the old time, and of the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and then of him who had pronounced it; and I almost began to hunger after

affliction, that I might prove the strength of my endurance.

And thus Mrs. Moore continued to read, and comment upon what she read, until she had completed her explanation of the chapter, and then she laid down the book. I thanked the widow woman for the delight and the instruction she had afforded me, adding "Why it seems, Mrs. Moore, that you are a scholar as well as a divine."

"I a scholar, Mr. Doveton?" she replied, with an evident confusion of manner, whilst her pale cheek became suddenly suffused with a hue of deep crimson.

"Yes, a *Greek* scholar, Mrs. Moore; did I not hear you read '*σρεψαρε δωμαρα*' just now, without let or hindrance?" I returned.

"You certainly did, Sir," rejoined the widow;—"but the truth is that our kind-hearted curate was good enough, some time ago, to put all the Greek into English characters upon the margin of this book."

Now, Mrs. Moore might have told me the truth. There was nothing at all improbable in her story, but when I coupled the confusion she had betrayed upon my alluding to her scholarship, with my previous conviction of her gentle birth, I had little doubt but that she *was* acquainted with the dead languages, though she was unwilling, in her

present condition, that the extent of her accomplishments should be known.

When Mrs. Moore had done speaking, I turned to Michael, and said, "Do you think that you should like to be a scholar?"

"Oh! yes, very much," replied Michael,—“I should like above all things to be a scholar.”

"Then I will teach you Latin and Greek; I will come every day to the cottage, and when I am gone—gone back to school, you shall keep my books and study by yourself, and I dare say that when I come home again I shall find that you have out-stripped your master.”

"Oh! how very, very kind you are," cried Michael, his eyes glistening with tears.—“But what will my dear mother say to this?” and he looked anxiously into the face of his parent.

"My son," replied the widow Moore, "do you forget that you are a lowly-born cottager?"

"No, mother, I do not forget;"—and Michael's head drooped like a flower, whose stem has been broken by the wind. •

"Michael, has Jeremy Taylor written this lovely book in vain? Are all his sweet lessons of contentedness thrown away upon your proud heart?"

Michael wept. This was the first evil word that had ever expressed the quality of his heart,—his

"*proud heart*,"—those tears of anguish were not the out-pourings of pride.

"I did not think, mother," at length, he said, "that it was sinful to thirst after knowledge. I thought that knowledge was a good thing,—good alike for prince and for peasant;—but I am not *proud*,—I am not indeed;—oh! recall that bitter word, mother."

"Knowledge is a good thing," returned the Widow Moore;—but there is one knowledge for the high-born, another for the lowly cottager. That which is fit for the king is not fit for the beggar. Educated above your station, you will be unfit for the duties of that station. You will aspire to be a judge or a bishop, when, with your opportunities, Michael, should you turn your thoughts towards the law, you will never reach higher than a scrivener's clerk; if towards the church, than clerk of the parish. If you are not proud, I see that you aspire—again I ask, have you forgotten your birth?"

"*Not wholly*, dear mother," replied Michael, and there was something, either in the words or the accents that pronounced them, which caused the Widow Moore to start, as though some painful associations had been suddenly awakened in her mind.

But the embarrassment she betrayed was momentary. Her displeasure, too, passed away with that

shock. She smiled, and her face was bright with an expression of fondness, as she said, "Come here, my sweet boy, and kiss me—you are not proud: I wronged you, when I said so—nay, wipe away those swelling tears. You *shall* know, Michael,—but not Latin—there are other things more worthy to be known."

CHAPTER XV.

THE ADMONITIONS OF THE MAN OF SENSE.

“ 'Tis a good thing that we,
Who are all impulse, should be sometimes checked,
Directed and set right by them who think
Calmly and leisurely before they act.
And better still it is when our friend's Reason
Is rendered savoury by the spice of wit—
'Tis healthy to be laughed at.”— MS.

I LEFT home at the end of this vacation, for the first time, with a heavy heart. Hitherto I had always anticipated my return to school with feelings of unalloyed delight; but now I quitted my home, if such it can be called,

(“ For without hearts there is no home,”)

with many a pang of regret, and many a tear shed

to the memory of those happy hours I had passed with the Moores, in their little cottage at Grass-hill. It has been said that "stolen pleasures are sweet:" but I must say that I did not enjoy my visits to the cottage any more, because they were stolen. On the other hand, the pure waters of my happiness were somewhat embittered by the consideration of the deceit that I was forced to employ. Believe me those pleasures are the sweetest which require the least secrecy, and occasion the least disingenuousness.

I think that it is old Owen Feltham, who says that "the soule is framed of such an active nature, that it is impossible but it must assume something to itself to delight in;" and as far as my own nature affords a proof, I can bear witness to the truth of this assertion. I could no more have existed without love than without air; the one was as necessary to my moral, as the other to my physical, well-being. I must have had always "some object to delight in,"—and a human object; for I hold with Cæsar, that it is censurable, if not sinful, to lavish our best affections upon soulless brute beasts.* As a child I had doated on my little brother; as a schoolboy upon more than

*Cæsar seeing in Rome one day certaine riche and wealthy strangers, having little dogs and monkies in their armes, and that they made marvellous much of them, he asked them if the women of their country had no children, wisely reprovng them by this

one of my companions ; but now that Michael and Ella had appeared, like bright visions in my path, all other objects were dim beside them ; and young Hayker, the memory of whom had sustained me throughout a great part of my vacation, sunk into almost utter oblivion ; for though pleasing, he had not the fascinations of Michael and Ella Moore.

Is it possible to love on for ever, giving but receiving nothing in exchange ? Will not the milk of love, thus acted upon, at length be converted into wormwood ? I think so : we may be wronged over-much ; we may suffer till we can endure no longer. Patience and forbearance are good gifts, but they are perishable ; and if I err not very greatly, the pure strength of love cannot sustain the soul long without sympathy. Pride and bitterness are too often, I fear, the hand-maidens of unrequited affection ; and he that has frequently been denied will soon cease to ask and to desire. Thus with me ; I feel a rooted assurance, that had it not been for the timely appearance of the Moores, flashing across my solitary path as they did, all radiant with the light of love, I should

question, for that they bestowed their naturall love and affection upon brute beasts, which they should with all kindness and love bestow upon men.—*Plutarch*, by Sir T. North. See *Life of Pericles*.

DOVETON.

have been betrayed into the dark caverns of misanthropy; for I hovered, at this stage of my journey, too closely upon those dreary confines. To speak more distinctly, at this period of my life, the constitution of my mind was about to undergo some great and fearful change for the worse—the honey of my mild nature was about to be converted into gall, when the sweetness of a new-born hope entered into my despairing soul, and bitterness passed away from me, and my salvation was thoroughly accomplished.

I returned to school; and as I approached, not the groves, but the many-windowed mansion; of Academus, the pulses of my heart throbbed with a violence which I had little anticipated; and I discovered that my home associations had not utterly stifled within me the love which I bare to my school-fellows. That chord was not yet broken. There were many whom I yearned to embrace.

Smith had left school, and Hawker had not arrived. The latter was my prime favourite, and I eagerly panted for his return.

He came, at length: two days after my arrival, I heard it said, “Hawker has come;” and I received the tidings with apparent unconcern; for love is an arch hypocrite, and where the waters run deepest, there are the fewest ripples on the surface. I believe that this is an old simile, but it suits my purpose to employ it.

With a beating heart I turned my face towards the door of the school-room, and watched for the entrance of my friend. It was play-time; and I anticipated the delights of a stroll in the fields with my favourite companion, asking many questions concerning the past vacation, and planning many pleasures for the ensuing half-year. At length, he entered;—I sate quite still;—I did not rush forward to embrace him, but I looked at him, furtively, as it were, whilst he walked up the school-room—for he was a general favourite—shaking hands with every one he met. I wished to *try him*. It was my desire to see whether he would seek me out amongst the herd.

I heard him ask, “Where is Doveton?” and presently he stood beside me. *I looked at him*—and the pillar of my love was prostrated at a single blow. My hand hung down listlessly by my side; I did not raise it in token of friendship. I had quite done with Hawker. *He wore a tail-coat.*—

I set down things as they happened. I do not expect that many will enter into these refinements: but the singularity of this confession is a sufficient guarantee for its truth. It may appear ridiculous; but I positively declare, that my heart almost died within me, when I first beheld the altered appearance of my young friend, Edward Hawker. There was a premature assumption of manhood, as I thought, displayed in the act of

thus donning, at so early an age, the *toga virilis*; and as I had always held, that there are few sights more disgusting than a boy aping the man, I now regarded young Hawker and his coat with feelings of very little complacency. But I was much more sorry than indignant. I could not help fancying that I contemplated the grave of my friend's boyhood; I thought that now there was an end to his sportive sallies, his ebullient joyousness, his freedom, his buoyancy, his ingenuousness, and all the thousand graces of youth; for the loss of which, nothing in after years—nothing that there is in manhood—can atone. Nature had gone forth from him, and had given place to her antagonist Art; and I regarded the change with those melancholy feelings which a man, after long exile, may experience, when he finds that the rural village, where his little homestead was planted, has made way for a populous town, and that almost every vestige of the Creator has been defaced by the handicraft of man.

Hawker perceived my dismay—at least, he saw something strange in my demeanour, though he scarcely knew to what it was to be attributed,—and he took no particular note of it, well knowing that it was my nature to be eccentric. “Well, Doveton,” said he, “what news from Dreamland, my boy?”

My answer was somewhat singular, and almost

as bitter as it was strange.—“That a new species of the *genus homo* has been discovered, which naturalists call *puer caudatus*,” I replied, glancing, as I spoke, at the garment that had so much offended me.

“Oh, my tail!” cried Hawker, taking in either hand a flap of the offending coat, and shaking it with an air of mock affectation;—“my tail!—and what do you think of it?—I’ll tell you a story thereanent, as they say;—but won’t you shake hands with me, Doveton?”

I extended my hand, but I did not return the cordial pressure I received from Hawker. I was sad, but I had banished from my heart, by this time, all feelings of bitterness. I felt that I had no right to be offended, and, mastering every unworthy emotion, I spoke out with an honest impulse.—“To tell you the truth, Hawker, I don’t like you in this coat.”

“Don’t you?—Well, I won’t wear it, then: but I must tell you what made me mount it.—I wanted to be more of a man.”

“And that’s the very thing I object to.”

“Well—but listen: I found it, in the holidays, a great bore to be counted such a boy. People thought me too young for everything. I was too young to be asked here, too young to be invited there, too young to go to a ball, too young to ride on a horse, too young to fire off a gun, too young

to drink wine,—in short, I was too young for everything, but those very things I could best do without; and this state of things, Doveton, I found to be very unpleasant.”

“ But the coat has not made you older.”

“ *Yes, it has.*—I’m a bit of a philosopher; and I hold that dress makes everything. I dare say, that you know the old riddle, ‘ What is Majesty, deprived of its externals?’—*A jest.* Now, what makes the soldier, but his uniform? What makes the bishop, but his sleeves? And *what makes the man, but his coat-tails?* I’ll tell you what—I know it by experience. I bullied the governor, and got a coat; and then I was old enough for anything. People invited me to their parties, and asked me to take wine, and the girls condescended to dance with me—and all owing to my tail. By-the-bye, Doveton, I saw Smith, in the holidays, and he gave me a letter for you.”

“ For me?”

“ Yes, for you, Doveton; and I’ll answer for it, that there’s plenty of advice in it. We talked a good deal about you; and Smith thinks that you’re mad.”

“ I’m much obliged to him.—But where’s the letter?”

“ In my pocket; but I won’t give it to you now, for I want you to talk a little more with me.

Now don't you think I'm right about the dress, and that everything in the world depends upon it? I'm sure you do; for when I wore a jacket, you were all smiles, and warmth, and affection; and now you are all gloom, and as cold as a piece of ice. Now, Doveton, I'll put you to the proof;"—and Hawker ran off, and speedily returned, having substituted a little blue jacket in the place of the offending coat-tails.

"Now, Hawker, you are more like yourself. I don't think that boyhood, after all, is a thing which we should be in a hurry to get rid of. Depend upon it, that, some day or other, when we have lost it, we shall long to get it back again. Shall we go out and take a stroll in the playing-fields? How much more that jacket becomes you!—If you had the smallest spice of vanity you would not, for some time to come, disfigure yourself again with a coat.—Now tell me what you have been doing with yourself?—But first of all where is Smith's letter? I will get that business off my mind, and then I shall have nothing to think of but you: and I shall be yours entirely. Thank you—let us sit down here, and I will read the letter to you, Hawker."

We sate down together upon a grassy bank, and, with my arm round the neck of my friend, I read aloud the epistle from Smith.

“ MY DEAR DOVETON,

“ Having promised you a letter, I begin herewith to fulfil that promise. Do not, I intreat you, throw it aside, before you have half read it, exclaiming, ‘ Confound the fellow, I am sick of his eternal common-sense.’ Believe me, when you are a few years older, you will not despise that commodity as at present. You may think that you stand upon high ground, and that you will remain there ; but beware of a descent more rapid, and more fearful, than is dreamed of in your philosophy. If you will travel in balloons you must not wonder if you meet with accidents. If you will voyage through the thin air, *caput inter nubila condens*, like Virgil’s fame, instead of keeping the solid earth beneath your feet, you must not wonder if you make woeful experience of the tenuity of that air, and the hardness of that earth ; the one will betray you for presuming to dally with her, the other will smite you, in revenge, for having spurned her. Give up your aeronautics, Doveton—let the gas escape at once, and never again trust to your balloon.

“ Do not suppose that it is my object to ridicule you. If I thought that you were ridiculous, Doveton, I should not trouble myself by writing this letter. It is not much in my way to flatter, but I must observe that had I not seen in you the germs of many excellent qualities, I should never

have intruded my advice upon you, as I have done for the last two years, nor taken out my pruning knife so often to pare off all the unseemly sprouts, which disfigured the fair tree of your morality. I would see you bring forth good fruit, as I doubt not but that you will, in due season; but you must keep watch over yourself; you must regulate your passions, you must sedulously avoid all excesses, or your fruit will fall unripe to the ground, and your autumn be a time of disappointment. I entreat you, Doveton, as you value your own happiness, not to disregard my warning.

The most amiable qualities of our nature require certain modifications. Even love, wherein you abound to such fullness, must be modified, or it will betray you into excesses not only dangerous but vicious. It is a mistake to think that what is amiable in itself must in its increase become still more amiable. Directly one good quality, by its enlargement, begins to clash against another, it has arrived at an excess which must be moderated; for one virtue administers to another, and when it ceases to do so, it changes its nature, and is no longer good. Agesilaus was once heard to exclaim, "Oh! how hard it is both to love and to be wise." Love warring against wisdom is not to be cherished, but to be cast out with contumely and disgrace. I question, whether more evil does

not result from the misdirections of the better qualities of our nature than from the onward progress of our baser ones, even as a treacherous friend is more dangerous than an open enemy.

I should be almost ashamed of myself for writing down such palpable common-places, did I not feel assured that these very common-places will be much more useful, and perhaps more novel, to *you*, than the most sublime and original truths, which, were I capable of giving birth to them, I should refrain from declaring in your presence. You have too much of the original and the sublime (?) already, and what you want is a little of the common-place. I think that I see you, as you read this last sentence; but do not look so contemptuous, I beseech you,—nor utter your indignant ‘Pshaws,’—nor exclaim, ‘Groveling worm!’

*“ For man is oft-times nobler when he creeps
Than when he soars,—”*

and this reminds me that I intended to tell you, that *if you read any more poetry read Wordsworth's*, and if you can manage to do so, read it always in the open air, with a beautiful prospect before you; and, perhaps, you will learn, from this greatest of good men, how to possess yourself in lowliness of heart.

“ I do not infer that you are proud; but you

are too exclusive in your sympathies. I have heard you complain that none sympathize with you—how can you expect it when you sympathize with no one? You voluntarily separate yourself from the herd, and then complain of your solitary lot. Take it upon my philosophy, Doveton, that the world will not trouble itself to quarrel with you; so that if there should be any schism between you, be assured that you have quarrelled with the world. Come down then to the level of humanity; for he is the truly wise man who moves with the stream and yet avoids its impurities—who is content with the world as he finds it, looking upon all things with a quiet eye, neither envying those above him, nor despising those beneath him, and readily sympathizing with all. Do not think that because you have set your thoughts upon lofty matters, and indulge in high aspirations, and talk about love, and glory, and knowledge, and such like abstractions, that all meaner things are contemptible, and that you lower yourself by ceasing to generalize; for such, believe me, is not the case.

“ I have heard you talk about the delights of boyhood, and yet you refuse to share in the very sports which engender them. You talk about the beauties of the creation, and will not stoop to examine a flower—you talk about domestic happiness, and yet look with contempt upon the

woman who sits by the fire-side, employed upon the fabrication of a pin-cushion. You attach no specific ideas to the blessings, of which you speak ; how then can you expect to enjoy them ? I am afraid that these dim abstractions of yours are productive of very little happiness. But let me assure you, Doveton, and I know not how I can embody my assurances in better language than that of the poet whom I have before had occasion to cite, that

‘ The dignity of life is not impaired
By aught that innocently satisfies
The humbler cravings of the heart ; and he
Is a still happier man, who for those heights
Of speculation not unfit, descends ;
And such benign affections cultivates
Among the inferior kinds.’

Need I say more to convince you that there is no wisdom in thus always aspiring heaven-ward ?

“ If you expect to possess yourself of happiness in the lump, I fear that you are doomed to endless disappointment. It is no easier to do this, believe me, than it is to carry off a house, or a bridge, or a cathedral bodily. Brick by brick we must accomplish the task ; and a number of small pleasures, like a number of small stones, consummate the structure of our happiness.

“ Do not then refuse to take what you can get, because you are not offered all that you want. I

never knew any good arise from thus grasping at an imaginary whole, instead of contenting oneself with the reality of a part; there is little wisdom in this rejection of small gifts, this yearning after consummate felicity; especially as the lofty-headed traveller, who will not stoop to pick up the small blessings which lie scattered in his path, is not always the most impervious to the annoyance of the petty difficulties obstructing his way. There is very little philosophy, I am sure, in refusing to derive happiness, from the same source that supplies us with wretchedness—from trifles; and if I am not much mistaken, I know one who will stoop to pick a poison-herb, but not to cull a sweetly-smelling flower.

You have ere now complained to me in pathetic language, that you are unloved in your own proper home,—but is not this misfortune, for I acknowledge that it is a heavy one, attributable to yourself and your peculiarities? I do not think that your heart is at fault; indeed I am sure that it is not; but there may be errors of judgment, and perhaps a little want of toleration on your part, though I am very willing to believe that you have been “more sinned against than sinning.” When I say that you lack toleration, I mean that you do not sufficiently consult the prejudices of those around you,—you do not enter into their feelings, and interest yourself in their pursuits,—you live

too much in a world of your own, and this I think is mainly the reason why you are not a favourite among your relatives, especially among those older than yourself. I do not say, neither do I wish to imply that you have a hard, uncompromising spirit; for I think that you oppose yourself to the prejudices, that surround you, only because you do not comprehend them. Let me advise you to study your own nature less, and the idiosyncracies of those around you rather more;—endeavour to look upon things with other men's eyes, and to argue with other men's arguments; be more watchful, and less thoughtful; and condescend a little to minutiae. Remember that we are judged by our actions and not by our feelings,—by that which is manifest, not by that which is latent; we cannot expect others to fathom the depths of our motives, and to penetrate the obscurity of our inner chambers of thought. What we do, not what we would do, is the criterion whereby we are judged; therefore it is not wise to neglect petty offices of kindness, which we may do at a trifling sacrifice, because we feel secure from self-reproach in the consciousness that we would be the first to stand forward, should an occasion present itself, to do a great service, at any cost, to the individual, whose less important interests we suffer to be superintended by others less zealous in reality than ourselves. People are not content with a homage

which depends upon some imaginary contingency for an existence at best adventitious, and perhaps destined never to be manifested. It is but a poor excuse for having suffered your friend to be horse-whipped, that had any one attempted to cut his throat you would have interposed at the risk of your own. Let me advise you then never to reject any opportunity of doing a kindness, merely because it is an insignificant one. In the daily intercourse of life, by these small kindnesses is our love made manifest, and if we neglect them, as I think you have done, the sincerity of our affection is suspected, and as we mete unto others so is it meted unto ourselves.

“ I have never seen you in your relation of son or brother, but it would not be difficult to draw upon my imagination for a portrait,* which would most probably be correct. I can fancy you dreaming of love, and devotion, and doing, in thought, many deeds of chivalry at the very moment that your assistance is wanted* in some of the petty details of ordinary life. Your hands are wanted to assist in the unravelling of an unfortunate skein of silk, whilst you have devoted them, in imagination, to the rescue of some unfortunate damsel. You are wanted* to go on a message to the servants’ hall, or to put a letter in the post, whilst you are wandering self-involved in the *arva beata* of Fancyland. Your sister is painting a picture, and your

mother working a foot-stool, but you take no interest in the progress of either the one or the other. You forget to congratulate the former on her birthday, and to admire the new bonnet of the latter. You set no stress upon these "delicate attentions," but others,—rely upon it,—feel the absence of them; and as you take no interest in the goings of those around you, those around you take no interest in you. If this be the true state of things, as I think it is, you will acknowledge that I was right in attributing your unloved condition to the peculiarities of your strange disposition.

"Errors, pointed out to you in this manner, for the most part suggest their own remedy; but I will nevertheless conclude with a little practical advice, which may serve to regulate your future proceedings. If you were a free agent I would strongly recommend to you *a few weeks in the tread-mill*; for directly your thoughts began to wander from the business immediately before you, you would infallibly be knocked down. However, in the place of this, let me exhort you to play as much as you can at cricket, at hockey, and at football. Especially, indulge in the latter recreation, for if you don't keep a sharp look out, you will get terribly mauled. I have told Hawker to keep you up to this; and he has promised whenever he can, to get on the opposite side to your highness, and to single you out for his antagonist; as he

happens to be somewhat adroit I'll answer for it that he will not suffer you to dream over your game very long before he is at hand to awaken you.

“Work hard at your mathematics, and read no other poetry than Wordsworth's. Never suffer yourself to be alone. Endeavour to find out the peculiarities of those around you, for by so doing you will have less time to brood over your own. Always be doing something, but do not be too particular in your choice of an occupation, for the greatest have condescended to trifles, and Philosophers have jumped over chairs. Read the newspapers, when you can get them; I will send you an occasional one myself: and perhaps some of your school-fellows will club for the County Chronicle. Keep an account of all the money you spend; for you cannot think yourself a hero or a philosopher, whilst you are entering six-pence for tarts, and three half-pence for marbles. Lastly, cultivate young Hawker's acquaintance, and

Believe me ever to remain, .

Your friend,

JOHN SMITH.

“P. S.—I shall be glad to receive a letter from you. I go to Oxford after the long vacation: having obtained a scholarship at Queens, I am entered at that college.^t Direct to me,——

street, Liverpool; and take care that you attend to my counsels; for it has cost me no little trouble to draw up this long homily. Take care of yourself, and no more ballooning.

“Yours, J. S.”

“Well done, old Smith,” cried Hawker, directly I had finished reading this lengthy document. “Well done, old Smith!—there’s some sense in that letter, eh, Doveton? And what do you think of that last scrap of advice? ‘Cultivate the acquaintance of young Hawker.’”

“I think” said I, shaking my friend warmly by the hand, “that it is the best sentence in the letter; and at all events it is the only bit of advice which I am quite certain to act upon. Do you think that I shall disobey the mandate?”

“It shall not be my fault if you do.”

CHAPTER XVI.

DULCE DOMUM.

“ There are some by nature proud,
Who patient in all else demand but this,
To love and be beloved with gentleness ;
And being scorned what wonder that they die
Some living death ? ”

SHELLEY.

I AM afraid that the Critics will object against my work that the action of its plot is languid. These Literary Watchmen will be telling me to “ keep moving ; ” so I must bestir myself, and accelerate my pace, though no skilful jockey ever started his horse in a gallop. And this reminds me that the characters of a novel are something like the horses entered for a race ; first of all you see the animals brought out for the saddling—but I

know not why I need retard the progress of my work still more by an extraordinary simile.

Mine is professedly a psychological narrative. I have less to do with the outer world of action, than with the inner world of thought and feeling; and, having declared this, I trust that the reader will not subject my work to any canons of criticisms, to which it was never intended to conform; and, moreover, I hope that he will acknowledge that I have studied, to some purpose, Fielding's admirable essay written "to prove that an author will write the better for having some knowledge of the subject on which he writes," and that I have not altogether forgotten the precept of the old Greek, contained in the two words *γνῶθι σεαυτον*, or as we translate it, 'know thine own self.'

But, to return.—I remained at Dr. Goodenough's two years and a half, after the occurrence of the events—if such they may be called,—which I have detailed in the last chapter. During this time, as may easily be supposed, my body increased in stature, and I trust that my mind did the same. I spent one of my vacations with an uncle, a widower, in the vicinity of London; the others were passed at Meadow-bank, and were not wholly unproductive of incident, though I am forced to brush by them in silence; only stating, that I renewed my acquaintance with the Mobres, and that the con-

sequences of such renewal may very easily be anticipated. I became devoutly in love with Ella, and desperately in friendship with Michael.

But I must not leave school altogether without one more affectionate retrospect. I well remember the last evening that I spent within the walls of my school-room. It was the eve of our 'breaking-up' day for the Christmas vacation, and we were all—at least, as many as could get places,—assembled round a blazing fire, singing "*Dulce Domum*," at the top of our voices, with less harmony than feeling; for the words of the song came *home* to us all, though few of us were acquainted with the music. We had formed a semicircle of considerable extent, in front of the cheerful fire, and the middle seat was occupied by myself; for I was not only one of the senior, but one of the most popular, boys in the school, and I had a sort of acknowledged right, which none ever disputed, to this particular situation before the fire. Nor was this all;—there was an especial chair,—Dr. Goodenough's great *arm-chair*,—which I monopolised almost every winter-evening, and which was always called Doveton's seat, just as much as if it had been my own. I do not think that there is any more enviable condition than that of a senior boy in a large private school, where good feeling prevails universally; where love, and not fear, is the stimulant of action, and all the more slowly look up to him with

filial affection and respect. I think that this was once my condition, for I was always a friend to the weak.

Upon the particular evening to which I refer, we had extended our semicircle more than usual, for the season was bitterly inclement; and, moreover, we were desirous that the *Dulce Domum* should be chaunted in full chorus. I was ignorant that this was doomed to be my last evening at school, but, nevertheless, I felt certain—it must be confessed *unseasonable*—sensations of melancholy. There is always something in the thought of parting, even from those I do not much love, which weighs heavily upon my spirits. But here I was about to part from many whom I regarded with affection; and though I expected soon to rejoin them, I could not help feeling somewhat depressed. There was a little boy standing behind my chair,—a fair-faced, curly-headed little boy;—he was one of my protégés, and, seeing the little fellow, I took compassion upon him, and inviting him to come within the circle, I took him upon my lap, that he might fully enjoy, without incommoding my neighbours, the warmth of the cheerful fire. I do not know whether I am singular in this respect, but whenever I have done an act of condescension and kindness, my eyes become full of tears, and very little will cause them to overflow. I cannot account for this phenomenon, unless it is that they

are tears of pleasure ; but so it was, that, upon this, as upon many other occasions, having placed this little boy upon my lap, and received his grateful acknowledgments, I felt that fulness of heart which makes the eye glisten with tears, and I struggled to suppress my emotions ; but to no purpose ; for happening to catch a few words of the *Dulce Domum*, which struck upon one of the most sensitive chords of my far too sensitive nature, unable any longer to restrain myself, I bowed my head, and wept outright.

There is something in this beautiful school-boy's ode, about being greeted by a mother's kisses : I remember the words, and hope that I never shall forget them ; but as they are Latin, I will not intrude them in this place, for I am just now writing especially for mothers ; and if there be any, in the small number of my readers, who have withheld these maternal kisses, I trust that they will ponder upon what I write.

I was one of the singers : among the loudest voices that were chaunting our school-boy anthem was mine ; but when we came to the "mother's kisses," it faltered, and then was suddenly still. The little boy, who sate upon my knee, marked the cessation of my singing, and *he* also ceased to sing ; for, looking into my face, he beheld the large tears rolling down my cheeks, and his young

heart sympathised with my sorrow, though he knew not the source whence it came. I felt the child's hand within my own, and the pressure of his soft cheek against mine, but I heeded him not; for I was thinking of the little love, and the *no* kisses, that would greet my return home on the morrow; and I thought of Smith's admonitions, and of how I had almost utterly disregarded them, and of the little progress I had made towards conciliating the affections, by humouring the prejudices, of my family: and thinking of these things, I was exceeding sad; but no one observed my sadness, save the little boy upon my knee.

I heard the child whispering in my ear, "Gerard!"—thus was it that he called me always, for he looked upon me as an elder brother;—Gerard, what makes you cry?"

I did not reply to this question, but quitting my seat, I took the little boy by the hand and led him to a dark corner of the school-room, where we sate down together on a form.

"Have you a mother, my little fellow?" said I.

"Yes, Gerard."

"And she loves you very dearly?"

"I think she does—indeed I'm sure she does, for I have no brothers and sisters."

"She will be very glad then to see you home

again, and may be she will smother you with kisses."

"That she will—but she never waits for my return, she always comes to fetch me herself."

"Happy boy!—and you love your mother?"

"Oh! yes, very much indeed, better than any one else in the world; and next to her I think I like you, for papa has been dead these five years."

"Never change, then—never change, my little fellow. Always love your mother best. There is no friend in the world like a mother—don't be laughed out of this belief. And, hark you, be very careful that you never say any thing unkind to her; for those are very bitter tears which a mother weeps, when the child of her heart proves an ingrate. But you are *quite* sure that she loves you very dearly."

"Oh! yes—I should be miserable if I were not."

"You would cry, perhaps."

"Yes, Gerard, very often."

"Then you can understand, my little fellow, what it was that made *me* cry a few minutes ago. I would not have told you, did I not think that, perhaps, you will value your mother's love all the more for knowing that there are some who yearn, in vain, after the blessings you so plentifully enjoy.

Bear this in mind, Alfred; and should you ever give way to unthankfulness, think of me and of what you have seen this evening, and thus learn to be grateful."

I went home; and I had not been there many hours, before I became certified of a fact that made no little impression on my mind. It was this—that I was a stumbling-block in the way of my younger brother's advancement. I do not think that Arthur himself regarded me in this light, but that my mother did, I saw plainly enough, and seeing it, I thought of Rebecca and of Jacob, the supplanter, and I felt an excess of anguish that was indeed difficult to bear.

Then I took out Smith's first letter, for though I had subsequently received many from my friend, there were none of equal value with this, and I read what he had written concerning the "misdirections of certain amiable qualities," and I said to myself, "Assuredly I see here the misdirections of maternal solicitude;" but I was nevertheless, determined still to 'bear up and steer right onward,' and with this determination, I went forth, full of hope, to visit the Moores.

But I had not proceeded far, before a sudden thought entered my brain, and caused me to turn back. In a moment I had formed a resolution, which I was bent upon immediately accomplish-

ing, and for this purpose, I went straight to my mother and said, "Mother, I have something to say to you."

She was alone and she seemed willing to listen.—"Say on then, Gerard," returned my mother.

"Is it not Arthur's desire," I asked "to go to some public school? And has he not set his heart more particularly upon going to Eton?"

"He certainly has," replied my mother, wondering what was the drift of such an interrogatory.

"You must excuse my questioning you in this manner—but let me further ask, whether your wishes are in accordance with dear Arthur's?"

"Why it is rather strange, to be sure, that you should take it upon yourself to question *me*—but you were always an odd boy—and 'as I am rather curious to know what you are driving at, I will answer you that I sympathize with his wishes, mainly *because they are his*. I have rather a horror of public schools, but I would willingly sacrifice my own feelings, if I thought that would gratify your brother's."

"And you are only withheld from doing so by a consideration of the heavy expense?"

"Why yes, Gerard, what with *your* schooling, and the girls' dress, and Walter's little allowance,

I find that I have not much to lay by, at the end of the year, for Arthur."

"My schooling must be a heavy expense."

"Yes, very heavy,—at least seventy pounds a-year, besides your clothes, and your pocket-money."

"And perhaps about double that amount might keep Arthur at Eton?"

"About."

"Then, mother," said I, "I have a proposition to make, which, I dare say, will accord with your views. Take me away from school, and devote the money thus saved to Arthur."

"I suppose that you would like this well enough."

"No, mother, I cannot exactly say that. I am very happy at school. I have many friends there, and the masters are very kind to me, and I have no desire to change. You wrong me, indeed, if you think I am putting in *one* word for Arthur, and *two* for my own self."

"Very well, Gérard—but I have made this proposal, already, and your father won't listen to a word of it."

"But perhaps he will, if I urge it myself—I am now, you know, more than sixteen, and I am the head boy at Doctor Goodenough's, though there are many older than myself. The doctor

says, that if I am not intended for one of the Universities, I know quite enough Latin and Greek. I will tell my father this, and promise him faithfully that I will not be idle at home. He has many books, in the library, that it will do me much good to read—and, mother, if he does consent, as I am almost certain he will, don't you think that I might prepare Arthur for Eton? They say that the best masters are those who are only a few lessons before their pupils."

"Do, Gerard, there's a good boy.—Come nearer to me," and she took me by the hand, and looked into my face as I stood before her.—"Now, I see how much you are improved.—How tall you are!—and what a high forehead!—and your hair seems to curl naturally. You always look much stouter when first you come from school,—perhaps the air agrees with you better; it is more bracing—there is something, I think, very relaxing in this climate. Let me see your eyes—don't hang down your head—why bless me, they are swimming with tears; what a strange boy it is, to be sure!—I think that your eyes are very handsome—indeed, they are much like my own; there, wipe them, I have said nothing unkind to you—I don't know why you should weep."

My heart was too full to answer, "It is your kindness that makes me weep."

"Well then," continued my mother, "you

will tell your father all this about being head boy, and Doctor Goodenough, and the Universities. You are very considerate—now just stoop a little, you are so *very* tall, and I wish to kiss you.”

Oh! how those ‘mothers’ kisses,’ thrilled through my whole frame!

I went to my father, and he granted my request. I was no longer a school-boy.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LOVING HEART AND THE RESTLESS SPIRIT.

' Oh ! none but gods have power their love to hide,
Affection by the countenance is descried ;
The light of hidden fire itself discovers,
And love, that is concealed, betrays poor lovers."

MARLOWE.

HAVING acquainted my mother with the success of my embassy, and received her grateful acknowledgments, I set out again for the cottage of the Moores, and I had soon passed their humble threshold.

It was the month of December. Before a bright wood fire sate the Widow Moore, working with her needle, and on one side sate Ella in like manner

employed ; on the other Michael, reading aloud to them. When I entered they all three rose together, but Ella was the first to greet me. " We were expecting you," she cried in a gladsome voice, at the same time springing forward to welcome me.

But she checked herself before she had reached me, and stood still as though she were abashed at her own boldness, whilst I advanced towards her and took her by the hand, and, unable to restrain *my* impulses, I kissed her delicate cheek and pressed her to my panting bosom.

" Ella, dear Ella ! how glad I am to see you ; and Michael too—studious as ever—and Mrs. Moore, how well you are looking. Why, Ella, you are grown quite a woman, and you are prettier every time I see you. What book is that Michael ? ah ! poetry ?—and Spenser too, as I live."

" A present from Sir Reginald," said the Widow Moore.

" Sir Reginald, eh ? Sir Reginald ? Is Sir Willoughby dead then, Mrs. Moore ?"

" Alas ! poor gentleman ! he has gone to his account ; he died about four months ago."

" We must all die,—but where's Larry ?"

" He is out with Sir Reginald, rabbiting," replied Ella, " poor creatures ! I wish, Mr. Doveton, that you could persuade Larry to abandon these pursuits. He won't believe me, Sir, when *I* say

that they are cruel, but perhaps he will believe you.”

“ And *I* wish, Ella—that you would’nt call me ‘*Sir*,’ I do not like it, I do not indeed. I call you *Ella* and you call me *Sir*.”

“ What then shall I call you ?” asked Ella.

“ *Gerard*—and why not ? Now, don’t shake your ringlets in that manner, but call me *Gerard* at once. You would not have me call you *Madam*, I’m sure ; but I *will*, if you call me *Sir*.”

But here Mrs. Moore interposed “ We are poor people, Mr. Doveton, humble cottagers, and *you* are a gentleman. You have been very kind to us, and have condescended to visit us and to make companions of my children ; but I hope that they will never forget themselves so far as to think themselves your equals. The children of a poor soldier’s widow are no mates, Mr. Doveton, for you.”

I did not much like this speech, so I made no answer to it, but changing the subject, I said, “ Do you know, Ella, that I go no more to school ?”

“ Oh ! how glad I am !” cried Ella, her eyes kindling with joy as she spoke.

“ And *why* are you glad, Ella ?” I asked ; but the young maiden made no answer ; her silence was a sufficient reply.

I looked at Ella ; there was a blush upon her cheek. Michael saw it too, and he answered for

his sister, "Because we shall see more of you, Mr. Doveton."

"You are very kind, Michael, and this reminds me that I wish to have you for my master. Yes, *you*, Michael; for although I have been to school, I am nevertheless exceedingly ignorant, and I always feel this most acutely when I am talking to you. I know nothing—nothing whatever but a parcel of Greek and Latin *words*. I do not know one star from another, and I am utterly ignorant of all the commonest laws which regulate the goings on of the creation. You shall teach me, for you are a priest of nature, and I desire to be one of your pupils."

"You flatter me, Mr. Doveton," returned Michael, "for indeed I know scarcely anything at all."

"Oh! yes, you do—you have been learning all your life, and now you are fit to teach. We never begin to learn until we escape from school; but my time has come at last, and I trust that I shall soon acquire some better knowledge than that of Greek metres and Latin Syntax—the petty learning of the schools. I am going to read now for *ideas* and to explore the *penetralia* of nature."

"Mr. Doveton," said the Widow Moore, "have you ever read the *Colloquies* of Erasmus?"

I thought this a strange question to come from such a quarter; and I briefly responded "Never."

"I asked you," continued Mrs. Moore, "because I have a copy of the book. I don't know at all how I came by it, for it is in Latin—a little, old book—printed at Amsterdam. It is never likely to be any use to us; but it is very much at your service, Mr. Doveton, if you will have the goodness to accept it,"—and Mrs. Moore left the room, and presently returned with the volume.

"I will keep it in remembrance of you and your family," said I, "for, some day, and that ere long, I may leave you perhaps never to return."

"Oh! don't say that, Mr. Doveton," cried Ella, and her eyes glistened with tears.

I sate down before their little fire, and I tarried there some time, partaking and communicating happiness. At length, I rose to depart, and Ella accompanied me to the outer door. She held something in her hand; it was a little white lamb's-wool scarf, which she had knitted with her own fingers, and now she presented it to me, saying, "It is a poor offering, Mr. Doveton, but I hope that you will accept it, and wear it sometimes, I am almost afraid to say, *for my sake*. But you know spoilt children will presume; and it is your kindness that has made me so daring."

"Bless you, Ella! God bless you, dear Ella!—and you made this on purpose for me? How kind of you; I will always wear it when I go out; and the first time, Ella, you know, it must be tied on

by your own little hands. There now, will you put it on for me?" and I inclined my head downwards, that she might do so.

My lips were so near her forehead, that I could not resist the temptation of a kiss.

"Don't frown, Ella,—don't look angry, for I could not help it,—I could not indeed. It is all your own fault, Ella, for being so very pretty."

"Mr. Doveton——"

"Oh! don't call me *Mr. Doveton*,—call me *Gerard*, now just once,—do Ella, there's a dear good girl,—I know not when I have been in such spirits as now, but I shall be still happier if you will call me *Gerard*."

"*Gerard*."

"Thank you, Ella,—now, good b'ye. I shall see you again to-morrow."

"Good b'ye, Gerard."

And full of joy I went bounding along the garden, and seeing that the gate was closed, I vaulted over it and ran up the hill, which lay in the direction of Meadow-bank.

I had not proceeded far, before I heard a voice singing some snatches of a well-known song,—

"For 'tis my delight, on a shining night,

In the season of the year—

On a shining night, tis my delight"—

And so on, ringing all the changes upon these two

lines, that they would admit of, over and over again, and never advancing any further.

It was Lawrence Moore. He was coming down the hill, with a gun over his right shoulder, and a couple of rabbits in his left hand. He had almost arrived at the stature of manhood, and he was certainly a very handsome-looking youth, though he lacked much of the grace and elegance that was so apparent in Michael and Ella. He was now nearly seventeen years of age, and though he was little taller than myself, he was of a much more vigorous frame, and of a much more manly aspect. There was nothing in his appearance, or indeed in his manners, that was above his actual condition, but he was doubtless a very fine specimen of the class to which he belonged.

He was quite over-joyed to see me; and, turning back, he walked with me up the hill. When our first salutations were over, he intreated me to accept the rabbits that he held in his hand. "For although," said he, "you did hear me sing that song about the poacher, I came by these fellows fair enough. Sir Reginald gave them to me himself, for I shot them with three other couple besides. Do you ever shoot, Mr. Doveton?"

We walked on, Larry retracing his steps, and conversed on divers subjects, connected more particularly with ourselves. Larry insisted on walking the whole way home with me, that he might

carry the rabbits, which he had prevailed on me to accept. As we went, I well remember that he asked me if I had not spent my last holidays in the metropolis, or in its immediate neighbourhood.—“And what sort of a place,” said Larry; “is this great city of London, after all?”

“It is a place,” said I, “that no man in his senses would live in, of his own free will.”

“And that’s just what Sir Reginald says,” returned Larry; “but for all that, I should like to have a look at it.”

“And having looked at it, I’ll answer for it, Larry, that you soon will wish yourself at Grass-hill again.”

“I don’t quite think so,” said Larry; “I have lived at Grass-hill all my life. I am tired of it. I have some very good freinds here, but I want to see more of the world. I am quite sick of this out of the way place; besides, in such a small neighbourhood one is known by every body in it, and I don’t like that—for people are spiteful,—they watch one, and if one isn’t a saint, one gets the character of a devil.”

“Ah! Lawrence,” said I, in a somewhat reproachful voice, “you are tired of your own happy home.”

“No, Mr. Doveton, not that exactly; but I want to see a little beyond it.—And you don’t think that I shall like London? Well, to be sure, I’m

not much likely to try it,—but tell me, Sir, are the play-houses there such very fine places, as they say they be?

I replied to this question, which was followed by a series of other interrogatories, all relating to the one subject, which seemed to engross Larry Moore's mind—the great metropolis, London. My answers were, for the most part, but little commendatory. Larry, however, scarcely seemed to believe me, and every now and then a sceptical smile betrayed the little faith that he placed in my representations. I thought that he was much altered, and that the alteration was much for the worse. He did not speak so affectionately, as he was once wont to do, of his mother, or Michael and Ella. A spirit of discontent, and sometimes even of bitterness, pervaded all that he said. It was evident that he was very restless and unsatisfied with his condition. Strange desires seemed to have entered into his heart, and—*he was no longer a boy.*

But all these unfavourable manifestations were rendered less repulsive by a certain under-current of melancholy, which seemed to permeate all his reflections. I could not account for this appearance. It was strange that such a blithe spirit as Larry Moore's should have any intercourse with sorrow.

We parted by the garden-gate, beside my

father's house. It was then almost dark, for it was mid-winter, and when I entered there were lights in the dining-room, in preparation for our principal meal. That night, after I had retired to my chamber, I turned over the pages of the book, with which Mrs. Moore had presented me. I have said that it was a copy of the *Erasmii Colloquia*, a book containing much wisdom. The first dialogue I read,—I well remember which it was, though for certain reasons I will not here allude to it,—made a great, and I trust that hereafter I shall be able to add, a *permanent* impression upon my mind. I was much delighted with the contents of the book, and read far into the night. At length my eye-lids felt heavy, and resolving to put the volume aside, I turned over its leaves, hastily glancing at their contents, that I might see what promise of amusement they held out for the following day. In about the centre of the book there were two leaves fastened together, as it appeared to me by a waifer;—I separated them, and excessive was my astonishment at finding a fifty pound bank-note nestling snugly between the pages.

As soon as the first extremity of my surprise had subsided, I lodged the note in my writing-desk, and proceeded to inspect the book, thinking that perhaps I might find some clue whereby to unravel this strange mystery. There was no *name* in the

volume, but there was an engraving of a coat-of-arms pasted inside the cover, with an old Saxon motto, and the initials E. A. "And this is all," said I;—"but what does it matter? If there be one weakness more pitiful than another, it is curiosity. I have nothing to do with this;—Mrs. Moore is fifty pounds richer than she was in the morning, and I—I am none the poorer." And thus soliloquizing, I laid my head upon the pillow, and was soon in a profound sleep.

Did I dream? Yes: I dreamed that Mrs. Moore was a queen, and Ella a princess, and that I was a great general, and Ella's affianced husband. "Dreams," quoth old Owen Feltham, "are notable means of discovering our own inclinations."—How very often have I dreamed that Ella Moore was my wife!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BEREAVEMENT.

“ Where art thou, my beloved son ?—
Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?
Oh ! find me prosperous, or undone !
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same,
That I may rest, and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend my name ? ”

WORDSWORTH.

ON the following morning, as soon as it was light, I started for the Widow Moore's cottage, to acquaint her with the extraordinary discovery I had made, and to put her in possession of the results of that discovery. There had been a heavy fall of snow in the night, and the aspect of the country was desolate and cheerless. I think that there is very little in winter to compensate for the absence

of summer. Ice and snow are but poor substitutes for running brooks and green fields; and a sea-coal-fire plays but a sorry part as vice-regent of the sun.

I had no sooner passed the threshold of the cottage, than I became conscious that some heavy calamity had lately befallen its inmates; for there was "weeping and gnashing of teeth," and all things appeared to be in confusion. Michael met me at the door, and his voice faltered as he said to me, "For God's sake, Mr. Doveton, come in here, or my poor mother will die!"

I entered the room.—There sate Mrs. Moore in her old arm-chair,—not, as she was wont to sit, erectly, but in a position which might have made one think that she had fallen there in a fit. She was leaning backwards, with upturned face and clenched hands, utterly motionless. Her cap had fallen off, and her long grey hair fell in masses over her shoulders. It was altogether a heart-rending sight. Ella sate upon the ground, at her mother's feet, her face hidden in the 'lap, and her beautiful yellow hair veiling the knees, of the old woman. I had never before seen such a picture of desolation, and a great fear took possession of my young heart.

I knew not what to do. I heard Ella sobbing, but I thought that her mother was dead. The old woman gave no sign of life. She did not move,

nor did she utter a sound. My heart stood still, as I approached the spot where the widow-woman sate, statue-like, with her daughter clinging to her knees.

I stood beside her chair, and I saw her move. Her whole frame seemed to be wrenched with an agony, and the poor creature groaned aloud. I never saw such a hopeless expression as there was upon her face at that moment. There was not a tear in her eyes, but the orbs seemed to be unnaturally distended, and they wore that glazed, arid appearance which telleth the history of a sorrow "too deep for tears."

I saw her lips move, and I heard her mutter "My son!—my Lawrence!—and why have you left me?—Gone, gone! and perhaps for ever!—My poor boy!—my own, and my only one!" and then she closed her eyes, and her lips were still; and I thought that she had lapsed into insensibility.

In the meantime, Michael had seated himself on the ground beside Ella, and taking one of her hands into his own, he was endeavouring, as I thought, to strengthen his sister, by making her feel the presence of his help in this hour of tribulation. And, indeed, when trouble comes upon us, there is exceeding comfort in knowing that we are not alone in the world.

Michael nestled beside his sister, but Ella did

not lift up her head. They all seemed paralyzed with sorrow; and I—quite a boy as I was—scarcely knew how to act in this extremity. A vague conjecture entered into my mind, that something horrible had befallen Lawrence, for he was absent; and the few scattered words which I had caught from his mother's murmurings, seemed to allude darkly to him, and I thought that the boy was dead.

At length, I found words to articulate "Michael, in God's name, tell me the meaning of this!"

I had no sooner uttered this sentence, than Ella started up from her lowly posture, and shaking back her disordered hair, she turned her face towards me, and, in hurried accents, exclaimed, "It is he—I knew it—I knew that it was Gerard's voice."

The young maiden seemed to have gained a sudden access of strength. My presence inspired her with fresh energies. She no longer abandoned herself to the indolence of despair, but she felt full of hope and courage, and strong to act, whilst I was beside her. This gentle, yielding creature, of fifteen, who but a moment before had cowered at the feet of her mother, utterly given up to fear and sorrow, and sobbing with all the weakness of a child, now stood beside me, with undimmed eyes and calm aspect, firm, resolute, and ready to act.

And I had wrought this change upon her; for she put her faith in me—and *she loved me*.

Ella clung to me, but not as one that was helpless, but as one that was ready to co-operate with me.—“*I will tell you, Gerard,*” thus was it that she replied in a calm clear voice to the question that I had put to Michael: “*I will tell you what is the meaning of all this. Lawrence has fled from us—I know not why, but he has gone, and I fear, not to return. He stole out last night after we had all gone to rest, and whither he has gone, none of us can determine.*”

“*Be sure, Ella,*” said I, “*that he will come back again,*”—but my heart misgave me sadly; for I thought of what he had said to me on the preceding evening, and I felt not the assurance that I pronounced.

“*No, Gerard, that hope is vain,*” returned Ella, “*he has gone for ever, not for a day, or a week—he has taken his clothes with him, and all the little money he possessed. Nor is this all,—that note, Gerard, tells us too plainly what we are to expect,*”—and Ella Moore pointed to an open letter, which lay at her mother’s feet on the ground.

I took up the note and I read — “*Mother dear, good bye. I am off to seek my fortune; I hardly know where myself, nor can I tell you for fear that you should attempt to bring me back*

again, which I do not wish—but wherever I am, be sure that I am safe. Perhaps I may rise, perhaps I may fall, but anything is better than never changing. Forget that I was ever born. You have Michael and Ella still,—they are better in every way than I am. Good bye, dear mother. It is no use trying to find me. Before you wake, I shall be many miles away from you. Good bye, Ella, good bye Michael, and be very kind to your mother.”——This letter was indeed convincing ; and Lawrence Moore had left his little homestead to seek his fortune in strange places.

“ You are right, Ella,” said I, “ it is all too true ; he has gone. But what can we do for your mother?—poor soul, it has been a sad blow to her !”

“ Oh ! Gerard, I can do any thing now—any thing, indeed I can—shall I speak to her ? Michael, dear Michael, but where are you going, my brother ?”

“ I am going for a doctor, Ella ;—don’t you think that it is wisest, Mr. Doveton ; I could not go before you came, but *now*,”—and in a moment, I saw him running bare-headed through the snow.

Ella drew more closely to my side, and looked up into my face so fondly, that for a moment I utterly forgot every other object in the world beside *her*. She seemed to place such entire confidence in my superior wisdom, that seeing me near her, she almost ceased to fear for the safety

of her poor mother. If a god had come to her assistance, she could not have felt more secure than she did at this moment, in my presence; whilst I, conscious of my impotence, was in a most painful state of perplexity, for I had not the least knowledge of what course it behoved me to follow.

All this time—and yet it was not long, for that which takes hours to describe, may be done in a few minutes—all this time, Mrs. Moore was leaning back in her chair, with her eyes closed, and her hands clenched, motionless as though she were a corpse. Ella looked at me, and I looked at Mrs. Moore, but we neither of us knew how to act.

But presently, not liking to be quite inactive, I went up to the afflicted widow-woman, and taking one of her clenched hands, I said, “Mrs. Moore, are you better?”

She opened her eyes, saying sharply, “Who speaks to me?” like one, whom a harsh voice wakens out of a pleasant dream; and Ella replied, “It is Gerard—Mr. Doveton—dear mother.”

The poor woman looked at me, and said, “Mr. Doveton, have you brought back my boy? They have taken him from me, they have taken my Lawrence—what shall I do without him? How can I live?—Is there no way to find him, Mr. Doveton?—Yes, there is,” and she pointed

towards the window.—“ Yes, there is, for the snow has fallen, and we might *track* him ; I think, Mr. Doveton, that I should know his foot-marks among a thousand.”—And she would have arisen from her seat, but I withheld, saying, “ It is vain.”

“ And why is it vain ? Oh ! you know not, Mr. Doveton, what strange powers of vision a mother has to track the foot-prints of her son.”—But seeing that I still shook my head, and that the tears streamed down my face, she repeated—“ But why is it vain ? you would not mock me, I’m sure.”

“ Alas ! ” I answered, “ because Larry departed before the snow fell, Mrs. Moore.”

“ And how do you know this, Mr. Doveton ? Perhaps you saw him depart—oh ! why did you not stop him.”

“ Indeed,” said I, “ I saw him not depart,—but mine were the first footsteps, which broke the surface of the snow.”

“ Then, there is no hope—none whatever, and I am left childless in the world.”

“ Childless ? ”

“ Yes, if I remember aright, there is something about it in the scripture.—‘ He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.’ Is it not thus ?”—and she appeared to wander again. The extremity of her affliction had made her wild.

“ Mrs. Moore,” said I, “ you forget altogether.

Are there not Michael and Ella remaining to you, and will they not be to you a very present help in this hour of trouble?"

"Ah! Michael and Ella, say you?—why yes,"—and the afflicted woman appeared suddenly to recollect herself,—“to be sure there is Michael and there is Ella,—but you know, that the lost one was my first-born, and, indeed, until this hour, I knew not how dearly I loved him. This is indeed a heavy visitation, Mr. Doveton, and, I may say, that it has almost killed me. But tell me, have I been raving much—have I said any strange things?"

"I have heard you say nothing," I replied, "unless it was to call upon your son."

"Well, and you were quite sure that there were no foot-prints in the snow."

"Quite,—both the lane and the garden, when I came hither, showed one untrodden surface of snow."

"And where do you think that he has gone."

"To London."

"To London!" exclaimed Ella, now breaking in for the first time upon our dialogue—"and may we not follow him thither—Michael and I? why should we not set out to redeem our lost brother?"

"Alas! Ella," I replied, "you know not what a place this London is;—you have never seen its

thousand streets, its teeming thoroughfares, its obscure haunts, its million of inhabitants. It is a worse than Babylonish capital. We might explore it for many years and gain no tidings of the lost one."

"True," said the Widow Moore, "too true—you have been to London. But spite of this, *something must be done*. I am calmer now, Mr. Doveton, and I can reason with you;—sit down beside me and let us talk over this matter. You once saved the life of my son by your courage, perhaps you may do so again by your wisdom."

The wisdom of one, who has numbered scarce seventeen years is not much; but Ella seemed to think otherwise, for, seconding her mother's request with an earnest voice, and looking beseechingly into my face, she said to me, "Oh! yes, you are much wiser than we are; so tell my mother what to do,—sit down as she asks you, and advise her."

Had I offered any advice at that moment, it would certainly have been—to *submit*. Firstly, because I could not see that there was the smallest chance in the world, of our being able to trace the fugitive; and secondly, because I did not sympathize very deeply in the emotions of the bereaved mother. Had she lost either Ella or Michael, I should have felt much more keenly for her situation; but, as it was, though I pitied her distress, I did not much grieve for the cause

of it. Lawrence Moore, by thus deserting his kindred, had proved himself unworthy of their love.

Such is a stern view of the case; and a mother looks with milder eyes on the offences of a beloved son. Indeed Mrs. Moore never uttered one single accent of reproach. In the agony of her bereavement, she overlooked the unkindness of him who had deserted her. She thought not at that moment of the cruel wrong she had sustained at his hands—she thought not of his ingratitude, of his hardheartedness—of the utter want of feeling he had manifested in thus quitting his home without the parting embraces of his family. Though the arrow rankled in her heart, she waxed not angry with him who had discharged it. Oh! indeed a mother's love, like charity, "endureth all things."

Despair is not always idle—we often continue to act long after we have ceased to hope; and Mrs. Moore, though her heart misgave her that all attempts at tracing her son would be fruitless, still determined to seek him. In this extremity she suggested many expedients, each succeeding one more vain than its forerunner, until, in the utter absence of all reasonable hopes, she became quite childish in her suggestions. To write to London, to put an advertisement in the newspaper, to placard hand-bills, to offer a reward, to apply

to the magistrate for a warrant, to charge him with some offence, to go to the commanding officer of the district, thinking that Larry might have enlisted for a soldier—to search all the neighbouring seaport towns, with the chance that he might have turned sailor—all these schemes were devised one after another, and abandoned as quickly as they were devised.

At length Mrs. Moore asked me if I had heard any thing of a company of strolling players, who had lately visited the neighbourhood. “For,” said she, “I have heard Larry speak of them, and he has visited them in Merry-vale, more than once. Perhaps,—yet how idle are all these fancies,—he may have joined the company of actors.”

“They were horsemanship people,” said Ella.

“Then, be sure that he has joined them,” cried the Widow Moore, “for great was his love of horses.”

Knowing, as I did, the vagrant propensities of the lost one—his love of liberty, and his delight in horsemanship, I did not think it by any means improbable that he had joined the company of equestrians. There is something free, jovial, and reckless, in the life of a strolling player; and I thought that to a mind, like Larry Moore’s, not over-burthened with refinement, hating nothing so much as restraint, and loving nothing so well as excitement, such a life must be peculiarly at-

tractive. Moreover, he had confessed the predilection; and there was another circumstance, only known to myself, which served to strengthen the opinion I had formed.

Ella read my feelings in the expression of my countenance. "Ah!" she said, "you think with me, that he has joined the company of players."

"Then we shall find him," cried the Widow Moore—"we shall find him,"—and a ray of hope illuminated her pale face with a sudden expression of joy.—"But, Mr. Doveton, do you know aught about them? Tell me—quick—speak, I beseech you."

"They left Merry-vale yesterday," said I,—
"I saw them preparing to depart."

"Then as surely as there is a God in heaven," cried the widow woman, with impassioned earnestness, "my son has joined the company of strollers."

This hope, which in Mrs. Moore's mind was almost tantamount to an entire conviction, generated a more serene state of feeling; and the poor woman's conversation now exhibited all that strong sense, for which it was so remarkable. We now consulted together, with entire calmness, as to the best course to be adopted towards the recovery of her lost son. Ella listening all the while, with breathless attention, to the words which proceeded from her mouth.

We had not communed long, before suddenly interrupting Mrs. Moore, I exclaimed, "I will go forth myself, and seek him among the players."

"Oh! kind, good, generous!" exclaimed Ella, starting suddenly up from the low stool on which she had been sitting,—“Oh! mother, what should we do without Gerard?—Has he not been a father to us all?”

"Mr. Doveton," said the Widow Moore, her voice tremulous with emotion,—“the child, indeed, has spoken the truth; you *have* been a father to us all—But yet, Sir, you cannot seek my boy; for you know not whither the players have taken him.”

"But I can learn—Hark you, Mrs. Moore, I will run with all speed to Merry-valc, and there I shall soon learn the course that the players have taken. Then I will hire a horse and follow them. I am off—Good b'ye, Ella dear, God bless you till we meet again."

"Stay, Gerard; you go not yet," cried Ella, laying her hand upon my shoulder—"you must not go forth hungry, or you will faint by the wayside. Humble is our fare, Gerard—but we have milk and bread in abundance. You have not yet broken your fast—you must want food—now sit down by the fire, Gerard, and I will boil you a basin of milk. You will not—oh! proud, proud—" and Ella's blue eyes glistened with tears, which she in vain struggled to suppress.

"I am not proud, Ella," I replied, taking the young maiden by the hand, "but time presses; I must not loiter, or I shall be too late to bring back your brother. You know that I have often eaten bread and drank milk, that you have given me, Ella."

"And is that all," exclaimed Ella, a smile breaking through her tears—"oh! then you must wait; for no time was ever yet gained by starting weak and exhausted upon a journey."

"There is wisdom in what Ella says," interposed Mrs. Moore; and hearing this, Ella looked triumphantly into my face, and taking my hat out of my hand, she went to a cup-board, and produced her little offering, and the milk was soon seething upon the fire.

Whilst Ella was preparing my repast, Mrs. Moore and I continued to converse together. The first gloss, as it were, of the new-born hope, which so lately had entered her mind, with a strength in proportion to its suddenness, seemed now to have passed away; and she began to consider the course to be adopted, in the event of this solitary hope proving itself to be a vain delusion. To some plan or other that I suggested, Mrs. Moore replied, "that it was good, but that the adoption of it would require the outlay of more money than she possessed in the world."

'Upon this hint, I spake.'—I had come to the

cottage for the express purpose of putting Mrs. Moore in possession of the fifty pounds, that I had found in her book ; but the sad scene, that I had witnessed, had caused me to forget the prime object of my visit. Now, however, it flashed across my mind, and I thought that this would be a good opportunity of acquainting the widow with my discovery.

So I said, producing the money as I spoke, “ Mrs. Moore, you are richer than you imagine yourself, by no less a sum than fifty pounds.”

Ella suspended her operations, and looked up wonderingly into my face, whilst Mrs. Moore said, “ Richer by what, Sir? I am poorer than I was *by a son.*”

I put the note into the widow-woman’s hand, and I said, “ This is yours, Mrs. Moore—I found it in the Erasmus that you gave me.”

The poor woman started in her seat, and with a sort of convulsive movement grasped the arms of her chair with either hand, whilst she uttered in a choaking voice, the one word “ Nonsense,” and the note fell crumpled to the ground.

But Ella was otherwise moved ; she looked at me with an expression of fondness, and said, “ Now, indeed, I know, Gerard, that this is only your delicate manner of presenting us with the money. You wish to give—I see through it all—and not be known as the giver.”

“Nay, Ella, as I live, this money was never mine—I never possessed so large a sum in my life. I found it in your mother’s book, and now it is legitimately hers.”

Mrs. Moore, who had by this time recovered her serenity—or, in a great measure, subdued her emotions, now said to me—“It is a strange business, truly, and I scarcely know how to account for it—Indeed, I do not very well know how the book came into my possession—I think it probable that the note had been placed there as a mark by some absent-minded individual—some wool-gathering student or other, and forgotten. I have known a case very much resembling the present one, where the sum was considerably larger, and the discovery made at an auction. It is certainly a strange circumstance; but I ought to be thankful, nevertheless, and hail the money as a present from God”—and thus endeavouring to explain away this mystery, after as common-place a fashion as possible, she folded up the long-hidden note, and deposited it in an old writing-desk.

She had no sooner resumed her seat than Michael entered the room, accompanied by the apothecary. Both were astonished and indeed delighted—for the man of medicine was indeed a good Samaritan, and he rejoiced in the recovery of the widow-woman, though he had lost a patient thereby. “Ah! Doctor,” said I, “for the sick at

heart there is no medicine so sovereign as *Hope*.'

"Hope," cried Michael, almost breathless with eagerness,—“hope—is there really hope?”

“Yes, Michael—yes, doctor,”—replied Ella, in hurried accents; for the tide of gratitude was strong within her, and no rapidity of utterance could keep pace with the rush of her feelings. “There is hope, and whence comes it, do you think?—Gerard is going forth himself in search of our poor brother. Michael, why don’t you thank him?—You are silent, when you ought to be praising him.—Look at the snow there, it is ankle deep, yet *he* cares nothing about it. Oh! indeed, it is very kind. No one else would have done this for us—no one else is so generous as this.”

And having uttered these words, Ella turned her face towards the fire;—hers was the eloquence of genuine gratitude,—she could not restrain herself,—her heart was full to bursting, and in this uncontrolled flow of words the magnitude of her feelings had found a vent. Yet when she had done speaking she blushed, and trembled, and looked at me, and that look seemed to say plainly, “Have I spoken too freely in your presence? Oh! Gerard, forgive me if I have.”

She put into my hand a basin of milk, and then seated herself beside me. In the meantime the apothecary had been conversing with Mrs. Moore,

and from her he had learned my proposed plan of action. He approved of it. Michael offered to accompany me, but I desired him to remain at home with his mother. He saw the necessity of this, and at once complied with my request. " 'Twill be a time of anguish with us, until you return," said the Widow Moore.

I started up, and was preparing to depart on foot, when the apothecary offered me his horse to expedite my journey to Merry-vale.—"Take the beast, and leave him at the Globe," said he; "for there you may hire as good a hack as any to be found in the county."

"Thank you,—thank you, Doctor,—now God be with you all, and sustain your souls in serenity and hope."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE DIVER.

‘ Are there not, Festus, are there not dear Michal,
Two points in the adventure of the diver ?
One when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge,
One when, a prince, he rises with the pearl—
Festus I plunge !’

BROWNING’S *Paracelsus*.

I MOUNTED the Doctor’s horse and rode off through the snow to Merry-vale. I proceeded straight to the Globe Inn, where I not only hired a hack, but learned the route of the players. . They had taken the road to London. I followed them, not so rapidly as I could have wished, for the snow retarded my progress, but I was somewhat consoled for this delay by the reflection that a similar obstruction must have impeded the advance of the players.

I thought, as I went, that I could track them in the snow, for I imagined that I saw the hoof-prints of an equestrian cavalcade. Nor was I mistaken: before twelve o'clock, about ten miles distant from Merry-vale, I overtook the player-troop with their baggage.

There was a string of some six or seven mounted actors, with the same number of led horses. Perhaps their complete stud consisted of about a dozen showy steeds, the greater number of which were white, besides a couple of little dwarf ponies, and a tame Zebra,—the three latter animals trotting along very quietly by themselves. In addition to this troop of light horse, there was the baggage, rightly called by the Romans *impedimenta*, in the shape of a large yellow-painted van, with chimnies, and a door to the rearward—altogether a very cumbrous looking vehicle drawn by two poor, unseemly horses, who had spent the best days of their beauty and strength in the service of the sight-seeing public. The horsemen were for the most part as shabby-looking tatterdemalions as I had ever seen; and a few moments sufficed to assure me that Larry was not one of them. A set of strolling actors, *out of uniform*, cut a very sorry figure at all times; but these fellows looked particularly unsightly, for the weather being bitterly cold, some had thrown horse-cloths over their shoulders to keep them warm, some

blankets, or pieces of old drugget, whilst one had applied to that purpose a tawdry theatrical cloak, and another a fragment of a green curtain. Add to this their unwashed and unshaven faces, with the remains of some two-days'-old paint still clinging to their cheeks, emaciated by habitual dissipation,—their frost bitten red noses, and their black-bowled pipes protruding from their lips, and you will see before you a company of men, which scarcely a mother in Christendom would desire her first-born to join.

I accosted the last horseman of the cavalcade.—“My friend,” said I, “have the goodness to tell me whether there is one Moore in your company?”

The fellow thus addressed did not vouchsafe to turn round his head that he might answer me; but instead of this he placed a hand upon the pommel of his saddle, and in a moment—by what dexterity of movement he accomplished this feat I cannot tell—he was sitting with his face towards the tail of his horse, and staring me very impudently in the face.

“La! you there,” said the fellow; and I knew at once by the singular contortions of face, accompanying his speech, that he was the clown,—“La! you there, what have you done to my horse, Sir,—I see that you have stolen his head.”

I could not help laughing at this thread-bare

circus jest,—the gesticulations of the buffoon were so ridiculous ; but I presently repeated the question, “Is there one Moore in your company, my good fellow ?”

“Give me back my horse’s head and I will tell you,” replied the mountebank, in a lachrymose voice, letting fall the corners of his mouth, and looking most ludicrously doleful.

“Look behind you, and perhaps you will find it,” said I, thinking it most discreet to humour him.

“La, here it is !” cried the clown, spinning himself round again, and resuming his proper position on the back of his docile quadruped ;—“La, how queer !”

• “And now, sir, that you have found your horse’s head, perhaps you will deign to tell me whether there’s one Moore in your most august company ?”

“Why, yes ;—since *you* have joined us, there is *one more* in our company, surely” returned the facetious mountebank, shaking his sides with laughter at the excellence of his own joke.

“You are a wit, as well as a player,” said I ;—“but, concerning this Mr. Moore ?”

“Look a-head,” replied the clown ;—“can you tell him when you see him ?”

“He is not there, certainly,” said I ; “the person whom I am in search of, is as good-looking a young fellow as you would wish to see, scarcely

seventeen, with dark brown curly hair, and hazel eyes; a fine open countenance, and rosy cheeks; tall, broad-shouldered, and remarkably well made."

"Altogether, I should think, by your description, sir, not very much unlike myself."

I smiled; and the mountebank continued.—
"Perhaps, young gentleman, I am that person. You have some good news, I imagine, to communicate, —a *next of kin*, or something in that line. You are a young lawyer, I take it, though you are almost comely enough for a player. It's a pity that, with your person, you should not take to the profession. But, as I was about to say, I'm thinking that I once had an uncle, whose name was—yes, it certainly *was*—Moore."

"I have every reason to suppose," said I, "that the individual, of whom I am in search, has joined your company of strollers."

"Men of property have done such things ere now," said the mounted buffoon, winking his eye very sagaciously,—"and have lain *incognito* from inclination;—and, in short, it is not to be supposed that I was altogether ignorant of my claims."

I now saw that the *soi-disant* clown was much more of the knave than of the fool; but as I had no reason for wishing to undeceive him, by declaring the real object of my mission, I suffered him to remain in his delusion, though I could not help

mortifying his hopes, lest he should think me one of the blindest fools that was ever employed upon a business of identification.

"I hardly think, sir," said I, "that you are the individual in question; for my instructions say, dark-brown hair, and yours is red—excuse me—light auburn; hazel eyes,—yours, sir, are grey; rosy cheeks,—yours are very pale; tall,—sir, you are barely five feet two. Excuse me, my dear sir, but my instructions oblige me to be particular."

"To be sure, there is a little discrepancy," replied the clown; "but it is merely on the surface—*primo facio*, as you lawyers say.—You see, young gentleman, that I am a scholar. But the fact is, that my hair would be dark brown, but that I have none; I now wear a wig. My cheeks, young gentleman, are actually rosy, but they are covered over with that infernal French chalk. And as for my eyes, sir, they were once hazel, but now they are grey from old age.

"By my faith! you are an ingenious gentleman," thought I;—but I was weary of this foolery; so, hoping to cut it short, I said, "My instructions inform me that the individual, of whom I am in search, is scarcely seventeen years of age, but, as I take it, that you, sir, are at least seven-and-thirty, or, by'r Lady, approaching two score, I scarcely think that you can be the person whom I have the honour to seek. Neither is he among the

gentlemen horsemen in advance of us ; and so you see my only chance remaining is, that he may be in the van."

"Stop a minute, young gentleman," replied the clown, "I am not quite so old as you imagine. In years I am still a boy, though much feeling and much thought have somewhat impaired the boyishness of my aspect. My life, though short, has been a chequered one ; and, as some great philosopher has observed, 'If time is to be measured by events, I have already outlived my time.' You see, young gentleman, that I have grown old unseasonably. Pardon me, sir, but my appearance belies me ; perhaps I may yet have the pleasure of reconciling my years with your instructions."

"I fear not, sir," said I ; "but perhaps, in the meantime, you will suffer me, with all humility, to pay my respects to the inmates of the van."

"You will find no Moore there," replied the player, somewhat surlily. "I tell you, young gentleman, you can't go in, for that's where we keep our ladies."

"I must."

"I tell you that you can't, young gentleman."

"But I must ; I have got a warrant."

"*Old birds—old birds*, young gentleman," cried the mountebank, looking exceedingly sagacious, and leaving me to fill up the remainder of the proverb.

"But," said I, thrusting my hand into my pocket, chinking the money that there was in it, and putting on my blandest aspect, "I have particular reasons for wishing to see this Mr. Moore."

"Can't come over me in that manner," replied the player.—"Honesty, conscience, integrity, and divers other considerations, forbid.—*Nolo episcopari*, as the scholars say,—which means, 'I am not to be bribed.' Besides, sir, you can't see what there isn't; and though I shall be glad enough to drink your health,"—and here he extended his hand, which was destined to grasp nothing more substantial than a stray snow-flake,—"*I cannot let you in to the women—I cannot, upon my honour!*"

• "Then I will get in as I best can."

"Upon my honour, sir,—"

"Confound your honour!—*I will get into the van.*"

And here our strife of words waxing loud, three or four of the van-guard horsemen now reined in their well-trained horses, and wheeled round, to learn the cause of the uproar. In a moment, I was surrounded by players of all degrees,—from the "riding master," who smacks the whip in the centre of the circus, to the "Juvenile Phænomenon," who stands on his head, rides three horses, and performs upon the slack-wire. There was the Austrian Hercules, born in St. Giles's; and the

celebrated American gymnotechnist, who had never crossed the Atlantic; and Monsieur le Chevalier Hippolyte, a thorough-going John Bull, and *le jeun Parisien*, and *le jeun Chinois*, the two sons of the manager; and all these came flocking round me, and asking what was the matter.

"Hollo, Poll Philpot!" cried Monsieur Hippolyte, with a right down English oath, such as no other country could produce, "what do you want with this young gentleman? You have not turned *tobyman**—eh?"

"I want nothing with the young gentleman," replied Signor Paulo, in a lachrymose tone of voice—" 'Tis the young gentleman that wants something with us."

"What—what?" asked half-a-dozen voices.

"Why, *a next of kin*," responded Paulo.

"That's me!—that's me!—that's me!" cried the Austrian, and the American, and the Frenchman, and the Chinese, all in one common language.—"And I have lost an uncle!"—"And I have lost a father!"—"And I a grandmother!" shouted one after another.

Now, seeing so many strange vagabond fellows about me, I began to lose my presence of mind. For a boy, scarcely seventeen years old, who has seen very little of the world, to find himself in the

* Highwayman.

middle of a band of strolling players, with an assumed character oddly forced upon him, and a somewhat difficult object to accomplish, is not a very pleasant situation, and I began to feel rather uneasy; for the confidence which had supported me in the presence of one, began to evaporate in the presence of many. But I thought of Ella, and of what a fine thing it would be to return to her crowned with success, and the anticipation of her ebullient gratitude, and of the Widow Moore's rapturous thanksgivings, and of Michael's more subdued, but not less keenly felt, delight; and thinking of all these things, I resolved to accomplish my purpose without delay, or at once to fail in the attempt.

• I threw as much manliness into my deportment, as I could, and speaking in a loud distinct voice, I said, "The truth is, gentlemen, that I have come in search of one Lawrence Moore, whose person is perfectly familiar to me, and to whose advantage I happen to know something, which I would impart to him as speedily as possible. Now if you would oblige me by drinking my health,"—and here I took out a handful of silver—"by drinking my health, gentlemen, and opening the door of your van, that I may just take a look in to see whether my friend is there, you will oblige me, gentlemen, very much indeed—very much indeed, gentlemen, will you oblige me."

“Can’t,” said the Austrian Hercules, “there’s my wife there.”

“And my daughter,” said the Frenchman.

“And Mr. Centaur, the manager,” exclaimed the American gymnotechnist—“besides, can’t you take our word for it; there’s only the women and the manager in the van. Can’t you believe the honour of a gentleman?”

Just as the American ceased to speak, *le jeune Chinois* threw a snow-ball at my head—a movement upon the part of the enemy, which, far from cooling my ardour, imparted to it an additional glow, and I instantly flung myself off my horse and rushed towards the van, which was dragging its slow length along at the rate of about three miles an hour. I was not long before I had found my way into the interior of the cumbrous vehicle, though, just as I had made good my entrance, I felt some one pulling at my legs, and then I received a blow on the back, which sent me headforemost into the lap of the Austrian Dejanira. The women all shrieked, as women generally do upon such occasions; whilst I, stammering out an apology for the indecorous manner of my introition, recovered myself with some difficulty, and sunk down in a sedentary posture, upon the floor of the caravan. Then, not without trepidation, I looked around me, and stared at the company into which I had thus precipitously intruded myself.

The interior of the caravan was divided into two compartments, the larger of which was to the rear—into this I had now thrust myself. On either side there was a stationary bench, or rather form, on which the women were sitting, some mending their tattered finery, and others doing nothing at all. These females were five in number, and for the most part, unclean and unhealthy looking creatures, though still bearing some traces of what ought to have been beauty. Every thing around them was in disorder; there were articles of wearing apparel, male and female, scattered about every where; there were bottles, and broken tobacco-pipes, and fragments of bread lying on the ground. There was a bag of oats in one corner of the apartment, a bundle of properties in another; hoops, covered with green baize for the ponies to jump through, were suspended on pegs around the wall, and from the roof hung a loose netting containing a miscellaneous assortment of articles, too numerous for an author to describe.

There was not one male animal in this compartment of the van—a circumstance which inspired me with courage. I looked at the women, and the women looked at me, and if there was confusion before my entrance, how much greater was the confusion now.—“Ladies,”—thus I began to address them—“pardon, I beseech you, the in-

decorous abruptness with which I have intruded myself into your presence," and having delivered myself of this exordium, I was much astonished at my own collectedness, and I began to think that I was safer in the caravan than out of it.

The women, too, soon began to collect themselves. "It is only a boy after all," said the wife of the Austrian Hercules,—“poor fellow! perhaps he is cold.”

“A handsome youth, too, on mine honour,” said another of the fair equestrians.—“He has come to join us I hope; he is just the figure for a Zephyr.”

“Oh! no,” said another voice, which, unlike the others, was low, soft-toned, and melancholy,—“he has not come to join us, I’m sure; for he is a young gentleman.”

This last speaker was a young girl about fourteen years of age,—a beautiful, dove-eyed little maiden, with long, sleek brown hair, and a clear transparent complexion, too delicate to indicate health. There was a touching look of sadness in her face, but little in harmony with her calling, and as she sate there in her innocence and modesty, surrounded by a number of bold, unblushing theatrical Amazons, she was like a prisoned dove in a cage of vultures, pining, trembling, longing to be free. It was this little girl, who enacted *la Sylphide*; and in truth she was like what she

personated ; for with her light, graceful, undulating figure, her rounded and taper limbs, her profusion of flowing hair, and her meek-eyed delicate face, it required but little art to array her in such drapery as might make her the perfect image of a Sylph, an Oread, or one of the Hamadryades.

“ He can’t be come to join *us*, for he is a gentleman,” said the little girl.

“ And why not a gentleman, child ?” asked the wife of the Austrian Hercules ; “ was not my husband a gentleman when he first came to join the company ?”

“ I don’t know,” replied la Sylphide, “ I was too young then to tell a gentleman.”

“ My pretty child,” said I, addressing myself to the last speaker, for I saw that from this quarter I was more likely to receive the answer that I wished than from any other, — “ my pretty child, will you have the goodness to tell me whether there is one named Moore in your company ?”

The girl was about to make answer, when a door was heard to open, and she checked herself, merely saying, “ Hush, here is Mr. Centaur.” I looked towards the upper end of the caravan, and I saw that the manager was standing at the door, which opened between his private compartment and the common hall, as it were, of the gang. “ And who have we got here ?” cried Mr. Centaur, in a voice of exceeding fierceness.

The manager had heard the commotion outside, and the women's shriek inside the van; he had felt the vehicle likewise stand still, and to say the truth, he was more alarmed than he was astonished at these circumstances; for strolling players are not more particular in paying their bills, than are other birds of passage, when they emigrate. In short he anticipated an arrest; and as he happened to be dressing at the time, he was in no hurry to make his appearance. His wife, who was likewise in *deshabille*, for this worthy couple were making preparations to cut their best figure at the little town they were approaching, now suggested the propriety of taking a precautionary peep through the keyhole, which Mr. Centaur having done, the burthen of his fears was lightened, for instead of a grim-visaged bailiff he beheld only a fair-faced boy. But terror having departed, gave place to wrath in the manager's bosom; and indignant at being thus disturbed by a stripling, he immediately threw open the door, forgetting that he was only half-dressed, and that one side of his face was thickly covered over with shaving-lather, and cried, "Who have we here?" in tones of no common irascibility.

I gave no answer to this question, but made my way up to the indignant manager, bustling through the herd of women, who all pinched me as I passed, with the exception of the little, mild-

eyed maiden, who whispered softly into my ear,—
“Take care ! he is strong and cruel,—do not make him angry or he will beat you.”—Alas ! this fragile little creature knew his strength and his cruelty too well.

“ Well, young gentleman, what do you want ?” asked the manager, as I stood before him.

“ I want to know,” said I, in a big voice, “ whether there is one Moore in your company.”

“ No, Sir.”

“ May I convince myself by looking into this room ?”

“ You may not, Sir,—my wife is there.”

“ And no one else ?”

“ No one else, young gentleman.”

But having proceeded thus far, I was determined to persevere to the end ; so I pushed past the astonished manager with all the strength that I could summon. The manager was a strong, burly fellow, but the suddenness of my attack almost paralyzed him for the moment, and very much against his will, I entered the forbidden chamber.

One glance was sufficient to tell me that Larry Moore was not there, which was fortunate, as I had no time for a second, before I was in the manager’s arms. I struggled ; but I was like a monthling baby in the arms of a huge giant. The man was full of wrath, and both “ strong and cruel ” as the

little Sylphide's warning voice had represented him to me in vain. I did not call for assistance, as I knew that I was surrounded by my enemies; besides, I was too proud; but I kicked manfully, and my thick boots must have told with some effect upon the bare legs of the manager. And now the strife became deadly; Mrs. Centaur, half-dressed as she was, forgot her modesty in her fear, and hiding her face between her hands, she wept plentifully, but she knew her husband too well to interpose a word in my behalf. The manager's face was livid with wrath; mine, I suspect, pale with fear. A little dog, that had been sleeping in the corner of the apartment, set up a shrill bark; then there was a crash, for we had stumbled against a box, on which stood a gin-bottle and some glasses. The manager looked at the window, but he saw that it was too small to throw me out of it; and then he trod on the broken glasses, which cut his feet so severely that he cried out with pain. This last accident brought matters to a crisis; he relaxed his hold of me, and then driving me into a corner, he proceeded to belabour me most unmercifully with the weapons presented him by nature for much better purposes than this. I did my best to repay the brute, but with very unequal success; for, in the first place, I was not very strong, and in the second place, as my back was against the wall, I could not exercise the little

strength I had, by striking out fairly at my enemy, —an operation which requires the arm to be drawn back before it is thrust forward. It must be acknowledged that I was in a desperate predicament; and being fully aware of this myself, and thinking that any change must be for the better, I dropped my arms, and lowered my head, and ran like a wild bull at the enemy. It was with no little velocity, I am sure, that my head encountered the stomach of the manager; for in a moment we were both of us rolling on the floor, and then—but I scarcely know what followed. The brute must have struck me on the head with some heavy instrument which stunned me. When I came to my recollection I was lying in the snow by the way-side. The van was gone, and the players were gone, but my horse, to its eternal honour, was standing very quietly beside me. I suppose that the animal, accustomed sometimes to have a drunken freight, had learnt to stand still whenever it saw its rider prostrate. But this matters not. I rose up and washed my gory face with a handful of snow, and then I looked about for my hat, but I suppose that I left it in the van, for it was nowhere to be found on the road-side; and then I remounted my horse. My clothes were very wet, and my head ached pitiably; and altogether I must have presented a deplorably woe-begone aspect. I looked at my watch, and it was only

two o'clock ; so that I could not have lain very long on the road. No one had come up during that time, or if they had, they must have passed by on the other side, like the Jew and the Levite in the Parable. With mingled feelings of pride and shame I turned my horse's head towards Merryvale.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WORKER IN THE GOLD MINES.

' So he became a rare and learned youth :
But O, poor wretch ! he read, and read, and read,
Till his brain turned."

COLERIDGE.

'THE reader may easily divine the reception I met with from the Moores, upon my return that evening to the cottage. The widow was too much grieved at the failure of my operations to express her gratitude for my services, whilst Michael and Ella, on the other hand, almost forgot their sorrow in their thankfulness. The latter, indeed, when she listened to the narrative of my adventures, and saw in my mutilated countenance but too manifest a voucher for its truth, regarded me with an ado-

ration, which would have been sinful, had the source of it been less pure, and she, who encouraged it, less innocent.

Very different, however, was the reception which my story met with from the members of my own family. My mother was very angry, called me a "ridiculous Quixote," and scolded me for losing my hat; my sisters said that my black eyes and my swollen lips had made me "uglier than ever." Arthur observed, that it must have been "capital fun," and that he would have "given anything to have seen the fight," whilst my father brushed a tear from his eyes, and applauded my courage and magnanimity.

"I don't exactly see," remarked my mother, in her usual sarcastic manner, "why you should run after every blackguard boy that chooses to give the slip to his mother."

"I can assure you, mother," said I, "that the boy was by no means a blackguard, and Sir Reginald Euston would tell you the same, if you were to ask him the character of the youth."

"Stuff!" said my mother, "what should *he* know about the scamp? and to tell you the truth, Gerard, I don't think that it is very creditable that *you* should have known one *in that station of life*."

"Oh! mother, I wish that you knew them——"

"I know them! I know such paupers! I won-

der, Gerard, that you have the impudence to hint at anything of the kind."

"Sir Reginald knows them," said I, dryly.

"That's what they tell you," returned my mother; "in short, they seem vile impostors, and they have made you their dupe."

This speech made me very angry, and I replied, "They are no impostors; neither have they told me anything, mother. I have seen Sir Reginald in their cottage; I have seen him break bread beneath their roof; I have seen him sitting beside their fire, and joining in their family prayers. I have seen the elder boy shooting with him, and the younger reading in his library; in short, mother, Sir Reginald esteems the family, and I think that this being the case, I, a much humbler individual, may do the same without dishonour to myself."

"Perhaps the old woman has a daughter," replied my mother, "which may account for Sir Reginald's assiduities."

I could not bear this any longer. The blood mounted upwards to my cheeks, and then suddenly disappeared, leaving them of a deadly whiteness.

"It is plain," said I, "that you know neither one nor the other, or you would have spared this bitter observation;"—and then I walked abruptly out of the room, and sought my little chamber in the attics.

Day after day was gathered to its fathers, and no tidings of Larry Moore reached the ears of his afflicted mother. Time, the comforter, brought no comfort to her, but rather augmented her miseries, because it diminished her hopes. It was a melancholy thing to see her; for a few weeks of anguish had done the work of years upon her person, and her pale face, her wasted frame, her decrepid movements, and her tremulous voice, all indicated a premature decay.

“ — Like a wretched soul,
Muffled with endless darkness, she would sit ;”

her head resting on her hands, and her elbows on her knees, not uttering a single word. She would fix her eyes on the embers of the fire, or on any other inanimate object, and gaze, and gaze, and gaze, until the dull orbs seemed almost bursting from their sockets, and then she would pass her hand athwart her face, and throwing herself back in her chair, she would close her eye-lids, and appear to sleep, though it was plain that her mind rested not all the while. The presence of Michael and of Ella, seemed to afford her no consolation. It was in vain that I told her often she had other children; her grief for the absent one had absorbed her love of those present; there was now but one feeling in her breast, and to this, with all hopeless-

ness, she abandoned herself. I often thought to myself, "Had I two jewels like Michael and Ella remaining to me, I would not suffer the loss of a rougher stone to plunge me into such utter desolation." But "the soule of man to man is a roome inscrutable;" * and how could a mere boy fathom the depths of a mother's feelings? "No, no, Mr. Doveton," would the afflicted woman say to me, when I was attempting in vain to console her with my assurances that her lost son might be treading the ways of happiness and honour:—"had it pleased God to take him from me—had I seen him die in my presence, it would have been endurable, for I should then have known that no more evil could befall him, and I should have hoped with a strong hope, that Christ had taken him to himself. But now I know not where he is; I know not what he may be doing. It is this dreadful uncertainty which agonizes me. He may be treading in the sinner's paths, and sitting in the scorner's chair. Evil-minded men may be about him. The oath and the blasphemy ringing in his ears, and the smile of approbation on his lips. Perhaps poverty and shame will be his portion, and that he will sink into the grave, spotted, with no friendly eye to watch over him—no hand to smooth his dying pillow. Oh! Sir, if God had smitten him in the flower of his youth, I should

* Owen Feltham.

have resigned myself without a murmur to my bereavement."

"But surely, Mrs. Moore," said I, soothingly, "this is the portion of every mother, whose son goes forth into the world to seek his fortune,—as who does not? Doubt and uncertainty must be hers, who loses sight of her children."

"But I would not have lost sight of him. Oh! Sir, I know his nature too well; without a pilot, he *must* go astray. He is too wild, too reckless, too full of spirit, to be safe wherever he may be. Had he remained at home, I might have controlled him. You may smile, Sir; but he is to be conquered by love, though never to be subdued by fear. Yes, I would have kept him at home till the hey-day of his young blood had subsided. You shake your head, Mr. Doveton—but, oh! Sir, you never had a son!"

In the mean-time, my brother Arthur, was sent to Eton, and I continued my studies at home.

At school, though I had never been so industrious as my contemporaries, somehow or other, I had always outstripped them. I am willing to hazard a sneer or two at the expense of my vanity, by giving it as my opinion, and I speak from conviction, that what happened in this individual instance, is not generally, nor, indeed, frequently the case. But so it was with me, that

though I did not apply myself very closely to my studies, I advanced with greater rapidity than did my more industrious school-fellows. The truth is, that my mind was endowed, in a high degree, with those analytical faculties, which enable him, who works in the store-houses of knowledge, to separate the grain from the chaff, with little labour and no difficulty. I attacked the leading features of a question, and troubled myself little with its collateral bearings. I liked to condense what I had to acquire into the smallest possible compass. I would strip it of all its superfluities; lop off all the redundant branches from the tree of knowledge, and peel the bark from the trunk, till I got at the naked, unadorned truth; and thus was it, that I always thoroughly comprehended whatever I undertook to learn. This cost me but little trouble; indeed, to use the bold language of our pompous lexicographer, leaving the reader to modify it as he thinks fit,—“I could have *torn the heart out* of a library in the small space of half an hour.”

It cannot be supposed that I acquired much really valuable knowledge at school; but I had brought my intellect into a fit state of preparation, and the husbandman, who has got his soil ready for the sower, has done no little towards the consummation of his harvest. I was now seventeen years of age, and great was my ardour to know.

My soul panted after knowledge. I felt that it is wisdom alone which elevates the man above the brute, and I desired to prove myself worthy of the high place that I held in the universe—worthy of my boasted sovereignty over the other living things of the creation. I aspired, and my aspirations were two-fold ; first of all I aspired *to know* ; and then I aspired *to be known*. Rarely, very rarely, indeed, comes the one longing unaccompanied by the other. Few are they, and great are those few, to whom knowledge is its own “ exceeding great reward.” Who have strength which they will not put forth, who feel themselves above their fellows, and yet will not that their ascendancy should be felt ? I was less wise, less noble ; I looked for the reward of knowledge, not in itself, but in the glory that it brings, in the praises that attend it, in the petty vanities of what is miscalled popularity. I was troubled with many far-looking hopes ; it was not enough for me to “ walk crowned with inward glory,” to be conscious of my own might, and happy in my own sage reflections. “ The self-content of wisest men ” was a blessing, which I was too weak to desire ; I said to myself, “ Knowledge is but the means of accomplishing an end, which is *fame*.”

Yet, when I examined more closely the nature of my aspirations, I found that their ultimate object was not to be *known*, but to be *loved*. I

looked upon fame, but as the "minister of love." If I desired to exalt myself above my fellows, it was mainly, that I might render myself more worthy to claim their sympathy and affection; it was with the hope that the admired of the many might be a fit object to be loved by the few. I little thought at that time—neither do I think so now—though I well know that it is a common belief, that there is no greater stumbling-block in the way of love, than fame; I was more charitable in my philosophy. I did not hold that to be great is to be envied; for I thought that love and admiration are stronger principles than envy.

" We live by admiration, hope, and love,
And e'en as these are well and wisely fixed,
In dignity of being we ascend ;" *

and I did not think so meanly of my fellow-creatures, as to believe, that by the encouragement of qualities opposite to these, we submit to a state of endless degradation. For, if we ascend by admiration, doubtless by envy we are debased.

It would not be altogether an uninteresting speculation to trace, with all possible subtlety, the reciprocal effects of my moral and intellectual peculiarities upon each other; to show wherein they harmonized, and wherein they were at dis-

cord :—to follow the several windings of the two streams now blending with, now discoursing from, one another. But I fear that the general reader would not tolerate such a proceeding on my part ; and, therefore, perhaps, it will be most wise to suffer my narrative to pursue a more circumstantial, than metaphysical, path.

I became a student — a severe, unswerving student ; not a mere *helluo librorum*, wandering without rule or method, in the wildernesses of literature, but a rigid seeker after truth, steadily pursuing a predetermined path, and never tempted into even a transitory digression. Yet, when I say that I pursued a certain path, I do not mean to affirm that I confined myself to one particular branch of literature, or science, but that I had chalked out for myself a certain course of study, which, though it diverged into many different ramifications, was still distinguished by unity of design, and that to this course I steadily adhered, fully determined to pursue it unto the end. I read, and the more knowledge I imbibed, the more I desired to know. The further that I advanced into these pleasant regions of “ Science, and Poetry, and Thought,” the more beautiful, and rich, and diversified, and extensive, was the prospect that unfolded itself before my eyes. On I went with the goal steadily in view, strong in hope, and full of courage, turning a deaf ear to all

foreign solicitations, and treading the lowly flowers of life under foot, with a devotedness of self-mortification, which in a higher cause might have gained me an eternal, instead of a temporal, crown.

Month after month passed away, and I felt that I was daily acquiring strength. I had now become the denizen of a new world ; but I know not whether it was a world of happiness or of misery ; for, in looking back upon this period of my existence, I can distinguish but one feeling,—an all-absorbing desire after knowledge, actuating and wholly engrossing me. In the ardour of my pursuit, I forgot the end, and thought only of the means ; or, rather, the ultimate was obscured by the immediate object of my travail ;—the means became the end. I lost sight of love and glory in the distance, and beheld only knowledge that was near at hand. Whether I was happy all this time, I do not know ; —I never knew. It was all to me like the excitement of battle ; I had no breathing moments to consider whether my feelings were pleasurable or otherwise. When I was not actually engaged in study, I was pondering over what I had last read. My brain was always at work,—the thoughts of the closet pursued me into the fields : it was in vain that I went abroad for recreation,—I could not unburthen my mind. I set my body in motion—I bared my forehead to the breeze—I looked

around me at the circumjacent country,—but I could not rid myself of this heavy intellectual thraldom ; —I could not be fancy-free. Even outward objects, which I beheld palpably, took shape and colouring from the most prominent remembrances that my recent studies had stamped upon my mind. I roamed with Petrarch in the meadows about Avignon ; I was with Tasso in the dungeons of Ferrara ; I sate with Ben Jonson, and other choice spirits of “ The Apollo,” in the *Old Devil Tavern*, at Temple-Bar. Then, at other times, when the pages of the metaphysician had been the last over which I had bent, I would fancy myself with Socrates in his Athenian prison, whilst the old man, with a serene aspect, and in a calm voice, delivered that wondrous discourse which Plato has enshrined in his *Phædo* ; or I would sit beside Epictetus, the stoic, in the palace of Marcus Antoninus ; or with Seneca, philosophizing in the death-agony ; or weep over the degradation of our Bacon, whose wisdom redeemed us from the ignorance of the dark ages in which he found us. It was to the study of the leading metaphysical writers of all nations, that I principally devoted myself. System after system did I explore, seeking wisdom in this multitude of counsel, but not finding the jewel that I sought. I searched deeply, and with the most unwearied perseverance ; but the further that I advanced into the inner places.

of science, the more hopeless was my uncertainty and bewilderment. I asked, with Pilate, "What is truth?" and first one philosopher, and then another, unfolded his little scroll of intelligence before my eyes, and answered: "Thou wilt find it here: in *my* system is that which you seek." What could I do, thus distracted, but endeavour to judge wisely for myself? *I endeavoured*; and patiently dissecting the machinery of each system, I arrayed their several constituent parts one against the other; and with the utmost candour, and all the discrimination I possessed, did I then attempt to make mine election from amongst the multitude of antagonist arguments which I had laid out for examination before me. I failed: but never was there a failure productive of more lasting advantages. I could not make mine election; I found not what I sought; and the phœnomena of the human mind were greater mysteries to me now than ever. But though I had not unlocked the portals of truth, I had found that which I knew must be a key to them: I *knew the causes of my failure*—and they were these: that I had entered the regions of philosophy without comprehending the language of the philosophers; that there was in this country not one, but many languages; and that this plurality had not only been productive of endless difficulties to all travellers in their domi-

nions, but had likewise been the immediate origin of almost all their intestine disputes.

Having arrived at this discovery, I recommenced my inquiries *de novo*, by endeavouring, after the fashion of the algebraist, to invent a sort of universal vocabulary, to which I might refer all the different terms of different metaphysicians; and thus reducing them to one common language, proceed without any fear of discovering, after months of travail, that I had been following up words instead of ideas, and had made divers journeys, by different roads, all leading to the same final resting-place. How often does the downfall of an error form a pile, whereby we may ascend unto truth.

Month after month passed away, and still found me an unwearying student. My father had been endeavouring all this time to procure me some situation or appointment; but he had lived so long out of the world, that he was almost entirely forgotten by those parties who have the gift of such things; and being poor, he had very little interest with men holding office in the metropolis. The little success, which attended his endeavours, was a source of the keenest mortification to him, and to my mother; but it was none to me. I made no inquiries into the results of his applications; and when any fortuitous allusion was made to the sub-

ject in my presence, I was always rather rejoiced than otherwise to learn that his solicitations had been in vain. Never, at any time of my life, have I been so independent of external circumstances as at the period of which I am now writing. I lived in a world of my own; I scarcely had any knowledge of what was going on around me; and I believe that, if I had been removed in my sleep from one country to another, so long as I had my books around me, I should not have been sensible of the change.

Even Michael and Ella Moore, I almost entirely neglected. It is true that ever and anon I would pay a visit to the cottage, but I scarcely took any interest in the goings-on of its inmates. I had a sort of dim impression, whenever I was in Ella's presence, that a being of exquisite beauty and grace was before me, and that it was mainly for *her* sake that I was heaping up the stores of knowledge, which burthened my over-laden brain. Sometimes, I would sit utterly silent, perhaps for an hour at a time, between Michael and Ella, in their cottage garden, scarcely conscious of their presence; and when the former, after a long discourse upon one of his favourite subjects, would appeal to me, asking my opinion, I would start and stare around me, like one awaking from a dream, and say "What is it that you ask me,

Michael?" or "Ella, upon what theme are we conversing?"

But this state of things could not endure very long; and before the autumnal winds had stripped the trees of their foliage, I became sensible of very strange sensations throughout my whole frame. There was a film over my eyes, a dullness in my brain, a feeling of extreme weakness in all my limbs. I found it difficult to read, and still more difficult to comprehend the little that was reflected upon my vision. There was a continued noise in my ears, as though a rapid stream had been rushing impetuously through my head. All was dim, chaotic, confused. I scarcely knew who I was or where I was. I went about from one room to another, and ordered myself to the daily goings on of life, but all my movements were mechanical. I scarcely had any will to direct me. Others spoke to me, and I made answer, but I knew not what I was saying. I felt neither hunger nor thirst, but I presented myself at all the meals of the family, and ate because I was accustomed to eat. I retired to my chamber at night, but if sleep be a forgetting, I am sure that I rarely slept. I passed many days in a sort of dim consciousness—a glimmering twilight of the intellect—and then at last the crisis is arrived.

I had over-worked my young brain.—One night, after I had retired to my sleeping apartment, all

the sensations, which I have above endeavoured to describe, came upon me with increased violence. I thought that my dissolution was at hand, and that I was about to be benumbed into a state of torpor, which would prove the fore-runner of death. Perhaps I do not employ the right expressions; for I find it extremely difficult to describe my physical sensations. I felt an extreme oppression about every part of my body, and more especially about the regions of my brain. A dull, heavy, binding pain seemed to grasp me. Such was the weight of the super-incumbent atmosphere, that I felt as though mountains were being piled upon me, as they were upon the vanquished Titans.— I opened my chamber window, and I looked around me, but I saw nothing but a pale sheet of silver. The full orb'd moon was shining brightly in an almost unclouded sky, and I was sensible of the light, but of nothing else; no shape—no shadow was distinguishable. I endeavoured to collect myself, but in vain. I walked up and down the room once or twice, thinking that, perhaps, motion might relieve me, but something heavy seemed clinging around me, and my limbs were exceeding weak. I shook myself, but to no purpose, for I could not set myself free. Then I sate down upon the ground, and I bathed my temples with water, and went again to the open window, that the night-air might blow upon my

forehead ; but I felt no coolness therefrom. Then I threw myself down on the bare floor, and pressed my hands tightly against both sides of my head, for the noise which I now heard was like the roaring of a mighty cataract, and all was darkness, both within and without. I had no other sensations but that of a continuous flowing through the cavities of my brain, and of a binding feeling about my brow, as though it were girt about with a circlet of iron ; and then suddenly all was still, and I seemed to fall into a complete insensibility. The noise had ceased, and the pain had ceased, and I was conscious of nothing further.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PHRENETICK.

“ Then I had visions though I never slept,
But aye my senses kept,
Wild, troubled visions, which I could not quell
Although I knew right well,
That my distempered brain saw many things,
Which were invisible.”

MS.

THEY took me up in a delirious fever. I know not how many days the phrenzy was upon me; but when my mind first struggled into consciousness, I thought that I beheld a person sitting by my bed-side, who resembled the Widow Moore, and that when I turned myself round I beheld a figure, “garmented in light,” like a seraph, which

when I looked upon it glided across the room and then vanished, leaving all things in gloom. I thought that this luminous figure wore the likeness of Ella Moore, but whether I beheld the real image of the young maiden, or only a bright vision, my dawning faculties were involved in too deep a twilight to determine.

But again and again, at intervals, gleamed the luminous apparition before my eyes, whilst the figure that I had first beheld, still remained in its old position, almost motionless by the side of my bed. My chamber was almost dark, but this thing of light, whenever it appeared, seemed to irradiate the whole apartment. At length I stretched forth my arms, as though I would embrace it, and turning to the stationary figure, I said "What is that light?" Then the form, which had been seated all this time, rose up and left my bed for a moment, and almost instantly I was in utter darkness; and I saw no more of the luminous figure.

Then I sunk again into a state of insensibility; and when the light of reason once more began to dawn upon my brain, I endeavoured to identify my situation, and to trace the course of events which had brought me into this perilous state; but I could do neither the one thing nor the other. I knew that my intellect was diseased, and that my body was in a fearful condition; but there

was no longer any association of ideas in my mind ; I could neither deduce my present sensations from any antecedent train of events, nor indeed had I any knowledge of myself in connexion with external circumstances. I was conscious but of my abstract individuality : I knew what I was, but neither who, nor where, I was. I knew that I was an unfortunate sufferer, in the extremity of a mortal fever—that I had been phrenetic, and was still slightly delirious—that I was very weak from a great loss of blood—and lastly, that perhaps I was dying. But this condition of mind was not suffered to endure very long ; a change came over me ; and in that change, was involved what may be looked upon as an extraordinary intellectual phenomenon.

Silvio Pellico, the Italian poet, in that interesting and pathetic narrative of his ‘Ten Years’ Imprisonment,’ relates that, during a severe fever which afflicted him in the course of his confinement, he imagined himself to be *two persons* ; of which the one with the other was keeping up a constant correspondence.—Now my individuality was tri-partite ; my soul divided itself, and entered into *three* different bodies : in short, I was precisely in the same situation with Cerberus, for I was “three gentlemen at once.”

I accounted in some measure, for this “Trinity

in unity,"* of my profane nature, by the circumstance of my recumbent frame, consorting itself day after day to a triple mutability of posture; to wit, one dorsal and two lateral positions, which was all the change of attitude allowed to me; indeed, all that I was capable of effecting. I remember, with a vividness of recollection half-painful and half ludicrous now, the good understanding which existed between the three persons of my Trinity, the consciousness, which they seemed to entertain, that the joint happiness of the body corporate, depended upon the united efforts of the individual thirds—the interested disinterestedness of each; the self-denying self-love, which in yielding its own claims, seemed to know that it advanced its own pleasures—the full knowledge, which each person exhibited, of all the intricacies of its triune nature. How distinctly do I call them to my mind! With what a topping courtesy of address did one ask permission of the other, to transfer the onus of my body, from the dexter to the sinister side, "if it did not interfere with the

* I disclaim all irreverent intentions in this allusion. I need scarcely suggest to the reader that what I am here describing is not an imaginary state of things, but a record of what I have actually endured. The words "Trinity in Unity," which are not scriptural but liturgical, occurred to me, during the time of my illness, as being peculiarly applicable to my condition. I have tained them, being utterly unable to find a synonym sufficiently expressive.

arrangements of the latter; or conduce in any way to its discomfort." "What consideration and urbanity was there in the mingled distress and fear, with which one, half longing half doubting, would soliloquize in abstaining silence. — "I should like to rest a little while; for I am weary; but then, peradventure I am selfish."—Assuredly, if the three graces had been set to work for Father Atlas, they could not have divided the labour of sustaining the world on their delicate shoulders with more courtesy of manner, or more sisterly devotion of heart, than did my right side, my left side, and my back, outdo one another in urbanity of demeanour, and sacrificial tenderness of heart, striving which should sustain the greater share of the joint labours imposed upon the Trinity.—Methinks, 'twill be a weary time, ere "we three" shall be chaunted again with the same unison of feeling, and the same singleness of voice! Peace to the *manes* of my triune self!

At other times, when the triumvirate madness was not upon me, I had the wildest waking visions day and night, that ever troubled man's brain with delirium. Yet the worst of it all was this; that sleeping I was never asleep; and waking I was never awake. I had, distinctly, two sets of ideas—the one confused, strange, and inextricable; the other reasoning, judging, calculating. The

most phantastic and disordered imaginations, which a mind distraught ever conceived, danced before my eyes, and haunted me; but *my other* mind, imbued with all the strength of my reasoning faculties, in their healthiest state, speculated, with great subtlety, upon the nature of those shadowy vagaries, those delusive creations of a diseased brain, which, although I knew them to be unreal, and could trace them to the source from whence they came, I could not by any effort of mind, by any process of thought, dispel. The healthier part of my intellect was unusually discriminative at that time. Perhaps, never, at any period of my life, was it capable of more delicate investigations—more able to follow with perspicuity the most complicated windings of physical philosophy. A variety of new combinations affecting the nature and workings of the human mind, and arising out of the novel and unprecedented state of my intellect at that time, were presented to, and seized upon, and enquired into, by those remaining energies of my mind, which sickness, so far from having impaired, had rendered more accurate and scrutinizing, than they were wont to have been, when the soundness of my body was intact. It is inconceivable what advantage I derived from this half-healthy, half-diseased, state of mind. It was, as though, to borrow a metaphor from the body, increased

powers of vision had been given to one eye, to mark the progress of blindness in the other. My intellect was compressed into a small compass—driven into a corner and straightened; it looked through an eyelet hole and saw little, but what it did see was remarkably distinct. The whole external world was involved in obscurity and confusion. I did not know precisely whether I was on land or at sea; I discerned not one person from another; I recked not whether it was day or night, winter or summer; I poured forth a most unintelligible medley of words, and asked the most extravagant questions; but I knew well enough, all the time, that I was uttering the wildest nonsense; though I had not the power to control myself, or to model my words into meaning. I was self-involved; there was a certain inward harmony still existing, to regulate my abstract investigations; there was great order and method in my thoughts whilst they confined themselves solely to the impalpable; but with the outward world they were utterly discordant; they could not adapt themselves to the realities of life; they were ignorant of all language but soliloquy. I was like the man, whom I have read of in a 'Tale of Wonder,' who saw nothing but himself; the whole of the visible world beside was involved in the deepest obscurity. My intellect revolved around its own orbit; and abstained from

all foreign excursions. The mechanism of my own mind—the source of my errant thoughts—the nature of my complexed imagination—were the subjects of my ceaseless speculation. And many were the discoveries I made—many the unforeseen lights which flashed across my brain, and informed me; but they passed away, and profited me nought, for my memory was weakened by disease; and I could not convey my thoughts into lasting characters, nor communicate them to be recorded by another.

But at length my delirium passed away. My disease wore a milder aspect, and my thoughts assumed a more every-day tone. I began to entertain more specific ideas relating to my unfortunate situation. My memory resumed its functions, and I recognized the chamber where I lay. I awoke one morning, from a heavy, dreamless sleep, and I was conscious of a great change. I unclosed my eyes, and I saw things distinctly. The curtains of the bed on which I was lying were drawn round me, but recognizing their pattern, I knew at once in what apartment they had placed me. Then I stretched forth one of my emaciated arms, and partly drawing back the curtain, which hemmed me in on every side, I beheld Mrs. Moore sitting by my bed.

I spoke.—“Mrs. Moore, I am better.”

“I know you are,” replied the widow, in a low

voice; "but you had better not talk with me yet."

"Oh! I must, I must indeed."

"Hush, I shall leave you if you do."

"No, no,—don't leave me, I shall die if you leave me, Mrs. Moore."

"Be calm,—excitement will be dangerous,—you had better not talk to me indeed."

"Oh! yes, only a few words,—just one or two little questions, and then I will be silent for an hour."

"Well, then—"

"Have I said anything to you, Mrs. Moore, during my illness, about a light in the room?"

"Yes, you did some days ago, and I immediately closed the window shutters."

"Yes—but I did not mean that light. I meant a luminous figure like an angel's that was flitting about the room, when I spoke. I have seen it since, often in my chamber—a bright, beautiful figure, with dazzling hair and white drapery, and once or twice it has bent over me, and it has sat where you are sitting now, and I should have thought it had come from Heaven if I had not felt its sweet breath upon my cheek."

There was a smile on Mrs. Moore's face as she replied, "You must mean Ella."

"Ah! I thought so. But where is she now?"

"Not very far off, Mr. Gerard."

"Oh ! bring her to me,—bring her to me now,—bring her to me, I beseech you, that I may bless her."

"Be calm,—pray be calm,—if you excite yourself I will not speak another word to you."

"And you will not bring Ella to me then?"

"Not now—another day,—another day, and you shall see her."

"Another day say you? *To-morrow?*"

"Perhaps."

"Ah ! good Mrs. Moore,—but tell me how come you beside me?"

"I am your nurse."

"My nurse!—did my mother send for you then?"

"Not exactly ; I offered my services."

"Oh ! kind, good woman !"

"Neither kind, nor good, but grateful."

"And is not that being both?—But tell me now, has Michael been to see me?"

"Every day ; and more than once has he watched beside you in the night-season."

"And my mother—"

"What avail these questions ? Have I not now answered enough for to-day."

"My last question will not bear answering."

"It will.—She has visited you daily."

"And my father—"

"Has *wept* beside your couch."

“ *Wept*;—and my father has wept over me ! But one more question, Mrs. Moore.—Have you heard aught of Lawrence ?”

“ *That* question will not bear an answer,—enough,”—and the widow Moore closed the curtains of my bed, and I heard a noise, as of suppressed sobs, which told me that I had touched unwisely upon a far too sensitive chord.

Methinks that is a pleasant state of mind, which follows a debilitating sickness,—that midway condition between disease and health; which resembles the state of the transmigrating insect, when it is not altogether a grub, though it is very imperfectly a butterfly. I do not know any period of my life at which I have been more sanguine and full of hope than I was during this season of convalescence. I built up the loftiest castles in the air, which were ever constructed by that great architect, Fancy; and devised with most elaborate minuteness all the furniture of these airy fabrics. The mind seems especially prone to grasp at minutiae during convalescence; it is less trouble to think of small things than to encompass affairs of greater magnitude, and the intellect weak and sickly endeavours to save itself from any violent exertion. Memory likewise at this season is always peculiarly vivid. Numberless little long-forgotten incidents now rise up, like ghosts from out their tombs, and assume a degree

of importance, which never has been ceded to them before. Small blessings too are magnified tenfold, and we yearn after many little things which hitherto we have disregarded and despised. Every thing too which we behold is vested with new beauty,—every thing which we feel, with new delight,—the sky is never so blue,—the fields are never so green,—the air is never so fresh,—and what joy is there, when for the first time we walk unassisted across the room! Therefore do I think, hope, and memory, and present enjoyment, being all rendered keener thereby, that there is exceeding pleasure in that benign state, which, if death puts not his *veto* upon all succession, is the natural successor of sickness.

But there was one joy, which I treasure up in my memory paramount over all other joys,—my first interview, after my recovery, with Ella.—Oh! how I blessed the luminous apparition that had flitted round my sick-bed, and how Ella wept with joy in my presence.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE POET, THE PAINTER, AND THE SORTES
WORDSWORTHIANÆ.

“ Science and poetry and thought
Are thy lamps ; they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot
So serene, they curse it not.”

SHELLEY.

Mrs. MOORE, upon first learning that I was prostrated by sickness, had walked up to my father's house, and offered herself to my mother as a nurse. Seeing that Mrs. Doveton was somewhat astonished at the nature of this request, and anticipating a harsh denial, the widow woman, with the utmost humility, said, “ Madam, I would not have ventured to solicit this favour at your hands, did I not feel that much experience in the chambers of the sick has rendered me, at least as well

fitted as any other to be the nurse of your son ; and you may rest assured that I will watch over him as vigilantly as the fondest mother ever watched over her child, neither asking nor desiring any reward for my services, but tending him as a labour of love. Oh, madam ! your son has been kind, very kind, to me and my children, and if you would but suffer me thus to testify my gratitude, you will confer a benefit upon a poor afflicted woman, which will entitle you to her daily prayers. Remember, madam, that I come not as a hireling, and that all I desire is to watch over your son."

My mother, ever since my adventure with the equestrians, had been strangely prejudiced against the family of the Moores. She had never seen them, and, to remove all unfavourable prejudices, they needed only to be seen. So it happened upon the present occasion ; for the neat, yet un-presuming, attire of the widow woman, her mild, pensive countenance, her low, soft voice, and, above all, her humble bearing, won the good opinion even of my mother, who believed the sincerity of her protestations, and readily granted her suit.

But Mrs. Moore had not been invested many hours in her office, before two new petitioners presented themselves, and Michael and Ella appeared before my mother.

Mrs. Doveton was in one of her blindest moods. She had just received a long letter from Arthur, informing her that Eton was the "capitalest place in the whole world for a spree;" and as this letter was written in high health and spirits, my mother, fortunately for the Moores, was in one of her most amiable humours, and she received Michael and Ella with a degree of urbanity which almost amounted to kindness.

"We have come, madam," said Michael, acting as spokesman, "to ask whether you will kindly permit us to visit our mother now and then in the sick-chamber; to bring whatever she may require; and sometimes to relieve her when she is weary?"

"Are you not too young, think you," asked my mother, "to be of much use in nursing the sick?"

"Oh! no, no, madam," cried Ella, interrupting her brother, who was about to speak;—"the weakest become very strong in the service of those whom they love."

When the young maid had said this, she cast down her eyes, and blushed; she felt that she had said too much; that she had presumed upon Mrs. Doveton's condescension; and that both the words she had uttered, and the manner in which she had uttered them, were unbecoming to one in her lowly condition. Poor Ella!—what would she not have given to have unsaid those few words!

My mother saw the confusion of the girl, and

enhanced it no little by saying, "*Love!* child;—what do you know of love?—But, tell me, why are you blushing?"

Michael answered for her.—"She thinks that she has done wrong in speaking to you, madam, with such earnestness."

"Never mind, child," said my mother, addressing herself to Ella;—"never mind; I readily forgive you. I like to see young people modest—and blushes denote modesty. How old are you, my pretty girl?"

"I am fifteen, madam," replied Ella;—"that is, I shall be sixteen next May."

"And you," turning to Michael,—"*you* are a very handsome boy;—how old are you?"

It was now Michael's turn to blush. "*If you please, madam,*" said he, "*I am one year older than my sister.*"

"And what does your mother intend to do with you? It is time that you were apprenticed to a profession."

"Sir Reginald Euston has been kind enough to promise to assist me," replied Michael.

"In what way?" asked my mother.

"In any way that I please, madam," said Michael.—"*In the church.*"

"He will use his interest to get you made clerk of the parish."

Michael's cheeks were dyed with crimson, as he

answered, "No, madam; he will send me to college."

My mother looked at Ella's beautiful face, and at her exquisitely graceful figure, and *smiled*. I doubt not but that smile was indicative of very great sagacity.

"Does Sir Reginald often pay a visit to your cottage?" asked my mother, fixing her searching eyes full upon Ella, as she spoke.

"Yes, madam," replied Ella, with a perfectly untroubled aspect;—"he does sometimes come to inquire after us; but his visits are very few now, compared with what they were when we were children."

"And why is that?"

"I cannot guess," replied Ella.

Nor could my mother; for she expected that the case would have been otherwise: nor could Michael, for he was guileless as his sister. But Sir Reginald well knew the reason. He had slackened in his visits to the cottage that he might escape those very suspicions which had found their way into the breast of my mother. Alas! it is a hard thing, that our very virtues should expose us to calumny; and that charity, the best of all virtues, should be that which is most frequently suspected.

I will not lengthen out this conference. My mother with certain restrictions, granted the peti-

tion of Ella and Michael. They were admitted to assist their mother, to lighten the toils of my nurse.

I recovered ; the physician took his leave, and once again health circulated through my veins.

I think that it is Martial, who says, "*Non est vivere sed valere vita,*"—not to live, but to live in health, is life ;—and fully impressed with this belief, I resolved never again thus wantonly to lose sight of that supreme blessing, the delights of whose presence we know not how to estimate, until we have tasted the miseries of its absence.

'Tis only when they spring to heaven that angels
Reveal themselves to you ; they sit all day
Beside you, and lie down at night by you,
Who care not for their presence, muse or sleep,
And all at once they leave you, and you know them.

The first book that I read after my illness was *Tom Jones*, and the second was *Wilhelm Meister*. All my volumes of Metaphysics had been scrupulously removed out of my sight, a precaution, indeed, which was useless, for neither *ontology*, nor *deontology*, had any longer any charms for me. I was only permitted to read for a given portion of time every day, but never at any period of life,

* From PARACELSUS, by Robert Browning, a poem, the perusal of which has afforded me such intense delight, that I must ever feel grateful to its author.

have I derived such intense pleasure from reading ; so true is it, that the limitation of our joys is the best augmenter of our enjoyment.

I read many works of fiction ; and a new field of intellectual adventure now seemed to expand itself before my eyes. My old yearnings came back upon me with renewed force, but not so much to know, as to be known. I said to myself, " May not *I* create ? may not my imagination body forth a series of fictitious adventures ? May not I, even I, disperse the emanations of my mind amongst men ?" The first answer which I returned to my own question, after reflection, was " Doubtless, I may,"—my second was, " Doubtless, I *will*,"—and immediately I began to create.

• I will not dwell upon my ambitious cravings, my dreams of fame, my inordinate vanity ; such themes have been dwelt upon too often ; let it suffice that I set about the construction of a work of fictitious adventure. I had certain qualifications which fitted me for the task, but I had not *all* the essential qualifications. An exuberant imagination, much subtlety of thought, and no inconsiderable knowledge of the mechanism of the human mind, to which I may add a very fair quantity of ready, off-hand information, were mine ; but I was little acquainted with the external indications of character : I could trace the inward workings, but not the outward manifestations of

the human mind in all its various idiosyncracies ; but above all, I was lamentably deficient in all the mechanical parts of authorship. I had no method—and method is as essential to an author, as it is to a house-keeper.

I wrote in my own chamber, and principally at night ; but I was somewhat chary of my labours. I did not forget, in the excitement of authorship, the miserable ordeal to which I had been subjected by my late indiscretions ; so I devoted but two hours in the day to composition, I mean to verbal composition ; for my creative faculties, waking or sleeping, were seldom or never idle. When I wrote, I wrote with great rapidity, and generally with the tears streaming down my face. I could not have written in the presence of another, and I kept my authorship a profound secret, which I imparted to none but to Michael and Ella. There have been times when the excitement of composition has been so intense, that overcome by my feelings, I have been forced to throw aside the pen ; but it seldom or never happens that the reader is most moved by those passages of a narrative which have been written with the greatest emotion. The most prominent delineations of feeling excite the sensibilities of the reader :—it is the under-current of pathos that fills the eyes of an author with tears.

Should any one, feeling interested in my adven-

tures, seek to know the nature of my work, I will tell them that it was a sort of psychological narrative, in which the different persons of my history represented certain abstract qualities, acted upon and modified by one another, and directed or misdirected by circumstances. There was a dim vein of allegory, almost indiscernible by the many, permeating every incident of my narrative. I was cautious that the weight of my philosophy should not encumber the progress of my history; and to accomplish this, I dressed up all my abstract truths in masquerade garments of fictitious anecdote, leaving the reader to detect my design or not, according to the keenness of his penetration. And, in truth, the public is not unlike a child, whom we must cheat into swallowing the health-bearing medicine by disguising it with some savory compound.

The later months of autumn passed away; winter followed, and I was still at home,—still engaged upon my secretly-cherished work. I passed my days chiefly abroad in the fields, taking as much bodily exercise as possible, for not only did I find that this species of exertion much benefited my physical health, but that my intellectual energies were never so vigorous as when my body was in motion. During my walks, I struck out more original ideas than ever I did in my closet; and many of the conceptions to which I thus gave

birth, were infinitely more striking and novel than those which I produced at home with far greater difficulty and travail. Conscious of this, and unwilling to lose the best emanations of my intellect, I determined never to go abroad without a notebook, in which I might set down my thoughts as they occurred to me. But this experiment was a lamentable failure, for the very consciousness that I had it in my power to catch and to perpetuate every passing impulse, strangled all those impulses in their birth, and I soon found, that whilst I was always in readiness to record my impressions, I had no impressions worthy of being recorded. Freedom is the natural aliment of the imagination; and fancy will not disport itself when it is conscious of being watched.

One of my favourite occupations was limning. I would pass hours together embodying on a flat surface the beautiful ideas which were crowding upon my brain. It was in this manner that I unburthened my soul when it was too full of lovely images—it was in this manner that I cooled my over-heated imagination. Reader, do you know what it is to be haunted by a strange shape, of exquisite beauty and grace, which stands before thee at thine up-rising, and sits beside thee in the stillness of evening, and gleams through the darkness of the night-season, until, though at first it was a delight, its omnipresence has become to

thee a curse? Thou dost—then, by such shapes I was haunted; sometimes in the fashion of a seraph-maiden, sometimes in the likeness of a boy-angel, sometimes as a radiant image, whose sex I knew not, yellow-haired and white garmented. And these shapes, when they had haunted me for a season, I realized by the aid of lines and colours, dimly and imperfectly it is true; but still, when I beheld them palpably before me, they ceased to haunt my imagination—I had unburthened myself—I had confessed myself, as it were, and rid myself of this spiritual thralldom.

But not only by visions of my own imagination was I haunted at this season of my life, but by the ideal creations of other minds—poets', painters', sculptors', or novellists'. I well remember how an image of Psyche, carved out of white marble, was wakened into life by the magic wand of my imagination, and how it sate beside me day after day, abroad in the meadows, or at home in my chamber, until its very loveliness disquieted me with vain yearnings, to possess what I knew to be unreal and phantastical. Often, too, has a painted figure of a nymph, a seraph, or of a little child, become life-like, and seemed to breathe, whilst I gazed at it, and when I have turned away it has followed me, and been my companion for days. But still more frequently was I haunted by the creations of the poet, and the novellist.

Ariel, and Una, and Euphrasia, and Mignon, have in turn been my beautiful associates. I have seen them beside me in the day-light—I have embraced them in my visions of the night—I have embodied my dreams upon the canvas; but no eye save my own, has beheld them.—I painted only for myself.

I taught Michael to draw—but little teaching did the boy require, for he was endowed with a most exquisite perception of the art,—yet his genius was not kindred with mine. To imitate, with lines and colours, the beauties of inanimate nature was Michael's pleasure, whilst I delighted in embodying, if not always human loveliness, yet at least such shapes as presented themselves to my imagination, in the likeness of humanity.

One day Michael asked me how it came to pass that I delighted so little in the beauties and benignities of inanimate nature, and why I never attempted to perpetuate some of its most beautiful aspects by transferring them to the canvass?—"Because, Michael," I replied, "my childhood was passed in a city."

Michael smiled incredulously, and I continued, "My first impressions were derived from brick houses and crowded thoroughfares. Human nature I beheld under various modifications, but of inanimate nature I saw little more than the sky above me, and that, for the most part, was ob-

scured by the dense smoke of the ever-busy metropolis. All the beauty that I beheld in my childhood, was *human* beauty, and therefore did I learn——”

“ Oh ! yes, Gerard, I know what you mean,” interrupted Ella, who was sitting by my side—“ I understand you, simple as I am ; and it is your kindness that has taught me to comprehend—your kindness that has made me thus wise.”

“ My kindness, Ella ? ”

“ Yes, Gerard, in these volumes, which are your gift, have I read these things. In Wordsworth—the Wordsworth that you gave me. Do you know, Gerard, that these volumes have taught me, more than all the other books I have read, to comprehend your wisdom—and Michael’s,”—and having said this, Ella opened a volume and read, addressing herself to me in the language of our philosophical poet,—

“ Amid the smoke of cities did you pass,
The time of early youth ; and there you learned
From years of quiet industry, to love
The living beings by your own fire-side
With such a strong devotion that you heart
Is slow towards the sympathies of them,
Who look upon the hills with tenderness
And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
*Yet we who are transgressors in this kind,
Dwelling retired in our simplicity
Among the woods and fields, WE LOVE YOU WELL.*”

Here Ella paused, and her cheeks were suffused, with blushes. The last three lines of the passage she had read were so very, very true,—they described her own condition, and echoed her own feelings so exactly, that when she closed the volume she thought that she had been guilty of an indiscretion in quoting such a passage in my presence, and in addressing it directly to me.

But Michael's face beamed with delight, as he bent his eyes affectionately upon me, and said, "How true it all is! We who are 'transgressors in this kind,' yes, Gerard, '*we love you well.*'"

"I am happy, very happy in your love, Michael."

There was a pause, for our hearts were exceeding full.—I laid my hand gently upon Ella's.

Then I spoke, "Methinks, Ella, that Mr. Wordsworth must have looked upon you."

"Upon *me*?"—and Ella lifted up her eyes with a look of wonderment on her beautiful face.

"Yes, upon *you*, Ella; for he has described you in a passage that I remember."

"I do not understand you this time," said Ella.

"Then Wordsworth shall teach you again,"—and taking up the volume that lay beside me, I read the following passage from the "Excursion."

"Serious and thoughtful was her mind, and yet
By reconcoment exquisite and rare

The form, port, motions of the cottage girl
Were such as might have quickened and inspired
A Titian's hand, addressed to picture forth
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade."

And then a little further on, I read—

"No one touched the ground
So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks
Less gracefully were braided."

"But read on—read on," cried Ella, in tones
of mingled archness and reproach,—“nay, if you
will not, I will finish the sentence from memory.
—Runs it not thus, Gerard,—

————— “*But this praise
Methinks, would better suit another place?*”

“Now confess, Gerard,” said Michael, laughing
as he spoke,—“that the simple Ella has beaten
you with your own weapons of verse.”

“Nay, Michael, I will confess nothing; for
praise can suit no place better than that in which
it is most deserved.”

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SENTENCE AND THE REPRIEVE.

“There is no hope,
And utter darkness curtains me around
On this side and on that —
But there is hope—
The Lord Antonio—you must sue to him,—
The Lord Antonio—he is great and good :
Tell him that you are wretched—he will raise you.”

Old Play.

“SAY something kind to me, Ella,—say something kind to me, Mike,”—thus was it that, a few months after the date of the last chapter, I unburthened my heavy-laden heart. It was spring-time,—

* “The season sweet of budding leaves,
And days advancing to their utmost length,
And small birds singing to their happy mates.”

The sun was shining brightly,—the air was mild, though not yet warm,—the fields were decked in their freshest verdure, and all things were gay, and bright, and cheerful, save my heavy-laden heart.

Ella and Michael were sitting on the brow of a turf-clad hill, which over-looked their little cottage. They were sunning themselves, in the full enjoyment of many, and great blessings,—the genial climate,—the bright sky,—the lovely prospect,—the melody of the birds, and, above all, the presence of one another.

“Say something kind to me, Ella,—say something kind to me, Mike,” I cried out, in a voice of anguish, as I seated myself between them on the turf.

Brother and sister each laid a hand upon my shoulder, and looking with inquiring fondness into my face, said, “What is it, Gerard, that affects you?”

“Thank you, Michael; thank you, Ella,—I’m better, much better now. Those few kind words have restored me. Believe me, that there is no better medicine than kindness for a sick heart.”

“But what ails thee, Gerard?” asked Ella, whilst her beautiful, blue eyes glistened with unshed tears.

“Oh! nothing, Ella; methinks it were a sin to be sorrowful on such a day as this.”

“Nay, Gerard; but there is something at your

heart,—something that weighs heavily. Who has been so cruel as to wrong that tender heart of yours with unkindness?"

"God forbid, Ella, that I should think myself wronged. God forbid that I should tax any one with unkindness."

"Ah! Gerard; thus is it with you always. You are full of forbearance, and it is noble to forbear; but you have been wronged—cruelly wronged, or you would not have asked in such a voice of anguish for a few kind words.—Michael, you are wiser than I am: speak words of comfort to him, Michael."

"You are very kind, Ella; but you see that I scarcely need a comforter now. Michael, we will talk about nature.—How beautiful and how full of blessings is this great universe. I have been thinking that we may love nature very much without abating one tittle of our human love—

"Love and the thoughts that yearn for human-kind," as the Poet calls it. I'll tell you what, Michael, I am vastly beneath you, as a philosopher. I grovel and you soar. I do, indeed; nay, do not interrupt me.—As I live, Michael, there is a yellow-winged butterfly. Do you think that I could catch it, if I were to try?"

Michael looked at me, but made no answer; and I continued. "Why, I have not chased a butterfly these many days; yet I'll wager, Michael, that

I'll catch you this little flutterer before half an hour has passed.—See, now; it has settled; I'll be after it.—But, come, Ella, I'll stake this golden ring against a lock of your golden hair.”

Michael laid his hand upon my arm.—“ Stay, Gerard, stay, I beseech you; I do not like this wild mirth; there is frenzy in it. Now sit down beside me, and speak calmly: this gaiety is forced. Think you, that I cannot read in your face that there is a world of agony in your heart? Think you, Gerard, that we, who know you so well, and have watched the changes on your countenance so long, are to be deceived by a few incoherent words of gaiety, and a burst or two of constrained laughter? Gerard, we know you better;—we know that your heart is sad.”

Ella sate by, weeping like a child. She could scarcely say to me, through her tears, “ Listen to him—listen to Michael.”

Then Michael continued, in his calm, clear voice, —“ Gerard, you may deceive yourself, but you cannot deceive us. You may think, like the fever-stricken mariner, that you behold pleasant fields and green herbage, when nought but the bleak, dreary ocean surrounds you on every side. But we, who stand by, Gerard, see too plainly the caltrenture that is preying upon you. Yes, indeed; we know that you are sad, *very* sad: then do not mock yourself,—the mask that you wear does not

become you—cast it aside, Gerard, 'tis a poor disguise, and we can read your heart plainly enough. I speak as I ought not to speak; but your kindness has taught me to be bold."

But Ella could only say, through her tears,—
"Listen to him—listen to Michael; for there is truth and wisdom in what he declares."

At length, I spoke.—"Michael, your hand; and Ella, yours;—how soft and white it is! You are right, very right, dear friends: I *am* sad—my heart is overladen; it is in vain to wear the mask any longer; for you see through this shallow disguise. Now tell me, Ella, of all things in the world, what, think you, would make me most sad?"

"I cannot tell," replied Ella.

"Nor you, Michael?"

Michael shook his head sorrowfully, and I answered my own question.—"Why, to leave you, my sweet friends."

"To leave us!—oh! not that," cried Ella, waxing very pale as she spoke.

"Yes, Ella—the fiat has gone forth. I *am* to leave you; and whither, think ye, I am going, my own, dear friends?"

"To London?"

"Nay, Ella,—nay, Michael; that were, indeed, but a short journey. I am going where we all must go: thus early, I am going to *my grave*."

"Stay, Gerard; this is fearful jesting," cried

Michael, in tones of calm rebuke. "No good ever came of talking thus; it is sinful. Believe me, it is sinful; and, indeed, it is not kind."

Ella's face was like an image of white marble; and, but for a slight convulsive tremor of her lips, you would scarcely have thought that there was any life in a countenance so rigid and hueless. Michael perceived this change in the aspect of his sister, and looking towards her, he laid one hand upon my shoulder, whilst with the other he pointed at Ella. "Look there, Gerard!" — he whispered in a voice only audible to me.

There was a silence, which Ella was the first to break. "Now, indeed, Gerard, do I believe that you are only doing this to try us."

"No, Ella."

"Then you have read too much: those books have again bewildered you."

"No, dear! — but I will speak out at once: I am going to *Sierra Leone*."

"To *Sierra Leone*?"

"Yes; it is a place beyond the seas — I scarcely know where it is; but they call it the *White Man's Grave*."

"No, no, Gerard; you must not go there," cried Ella, trembling all over, and looking into my face, as she spoke, with an aspect of touching supplication. "Why should you go to that strange place, when, in your own country, there are so many

blessings? Oh, Gerard! continue amongst us—with thine own people, with thy true friends, with us. I beseech thee to go not; yes, I—I, a poor cottage-girl,—I beseech thee, though I am very simple, very weak; and you—”

“Hold, Ella;—we will talk calmly. I must not be a burthen upon my family. I must not eat the bread of indolence. The time has now come, at which it behoves me to take the sword into my hand, and to carve my way through the world. I stand now upon the verge of manhood. I must go forth to seek my fortune. The path has been chalked out for me by others; by them whose right, whose duty it is to direct me in the way that I should go. A distant country has been pointed out to me as my destined sphere of action: I must go there. It is in vain to murmur, Ella, against the decrees of inevitable fate. All that I can ask you to do is, to pray for me when I am gone. God is merciful. He says, ‘Ask, and it shall be given;’ and the prayers of the innocent, and the pure of heart, can never be offered up in vain.”

When I ceased to speak, Ella laid her hand upon my arm; her countenance had suddenly assumed a brighter, a more hopeful aspect; and her delicate limbs no longer trembled with emotion and fear.

“Listen to me, Gerard,” she said, “for I know what you must do. You must go to Sir Reginald

Euston ; he will help us, I know that he will help us, for to raise the wretched is his delight. You shake your head ; ah ! I know that look ; 'tis a bad look, 'tis a look of pride. Gerard, you will go to Sir Reginald, you *will* ; for I can read your face like a book ; and now it is more mild, more calm, more full of wisdom ; and you will tell Sir Reginald—but shall I dictate to you ? Gerard, you know what to do.”

“ Indeed, Ella, I do not know. Sir Reginald has been a kind friend to me ; but though he has done much for me, I have asked nothing, and I scarcely know with what favour he would receive me in the character of a petitioner.”

“ Be sure, Gerard, that whatever you ask, he will do for you, I know he will ; go to him, say that your parents are about to send you to that hateful place, and beseech him, if he loves, to save, you.”

“ But how can he save me, Ella ?”

“ He has power—he is a great man—he is very rich, and he might get you a post—a post of honour and profit, which none would grace so well as yourself.”

“ And what if I should fail, Ella ?”

“ You cannot fail.”

“ But what if I should ?”

“ Why, then,”—and she pondered for a moment ;—“ why, then,—how could we have forgotten

it?—There is your *book*, Gerard, there is your *book*."

"And what if my book should fail?"

"It will not, it cannot fail."

I smiled, and said, "Ella, if I were sure of having always such kind critics as you, I would spend my life in writing books for their amusement."

"But you will go, Gerard, to the hall?"

"I will, I will go directly; good bye, Ella; good bye, Mike;"—and I started up suddenly from my recumbent posture, and ran down the slope of the hill, shouting all the way as I went.

I had promised Sir Reginald Euston that, should I ever require any favour at his hands, I would not hesitate to ask it. The baronet, ever since the day on which I had saved the life of his horse, had been unremitting in his little acts of kindness towards me, and he had often said, "How comes it, Gerard, that you never ask me to do anything for you, not even so much as to lend you a book, or to mount you, or give you a day's shooting? I do not find that others are so scrupulous; and 'tis a pity that they whom I would most readily serve, should be the most unwilling to be served by me. Be sure, Gerard, that you do me a greater favour by asking, than I can do to you by conferring, a benefit. Ask——," but I had never asked even the smallest favour. I knew not why; perhaps it

was pride, perhaps it was modesty that restrained me : but so it was, that I had, and I have to this moment, an almost invincible repugnance against begging, and more than once have I suffered this feeling to stand prominently in the way of my interest. I knew my weakness, if such it can be called, and when I started upon this memorable day, to throw myself for succour at the feet of the baronet, I well remember that I ran with all my speed, singing as I went along, and shouting to the birds as they flew across my path, committing all manner of extravagancies, that I might forget the object of my journey, and be secure from the intrusion of any after-thoughts which might change the nature of my resolutions, and cause me to turn back, without accomplishing the task that I had proposed to myself.

I found the baronet in his study. He appeared to be unwontedly busy ; he was writing, and the table by which he sat was strewn with papers of various descriptions. His steward had just quitted the room ; and I could see, at a glance, that Sir Reginald's mind was not in its usual state of calm equanimity.

I said to myself, " There is something on *his* mind, and therefore I will say nothing of that which is preying upon *mine*." It needs but a feather to turn the course of a current, which is flowing out of the channel of our inclinations.

The baronet shook me cordially by the hand,

"Sit down, Gerard," he said, "I'm glad, very glad to see you;—no, no, you don't interrupt me;—you have not been here for so long, that it is quite a treat when you do come to the hall; and, to tell you the truth, Gerard, you have come at a fit season, for I start to-morrow morning for Paris."

"For Paris?—then, I fear, Sir Reginald, that this will be our last meeting."

"Our last meeting!—I shall soon return."

"But, I fear, Sir Reginald, that I shall *not*."

"I don't understand you, Gerard," said the baronet,—"*whither are you going?*"

"Merely to *Sierra Leone*," I replied, with a most melancholy smile upon my face.

"To *Sierra Leone*? nonsense, my dear boy, you must not go to *Sierra Leone*; you will die there; you will be cut off in the very spring-season of your youth. Oh, Gerard, Gerard! why did you not tell me this before?"

"Sir Reginald!—my poor father has now been using every endeavour, for more than a year, to procure me a situation. He has no money, and very little interest, and it is notorious that all the professions have never been so overstocked as they are now. He has, therefore, had the utmost difficulty in procuring me even the present appointment,—an under-secretaryship at *Sierra Leone*.

What can I do ? I have no other alternative than to remain a burthen upon his hands, living in a state of hopeless indolence, without any prospect before me. Sir Reginald, to speak freely, I came hither purposely to consult you ; but seeing that you had much to do, and thinking that you were not in the enjoyment of your usual spirits, I had intended to have held my peace ; but now that you ask me why I have not consulted you, I answer, that my father only received a notice of the appointment this very morning, and that I have taken this early opportunity to intreat your advice and assistance."

"And my advice and assistance you shall have."

"Sir Reginald, you have always been my friend ; but let me beseech you not to think of me now ; you have other affairs to engross you at this moment ; you cannot have leisure to think of mine."

"I have, and I trust that I always shall have, leisure to do my duty."

"Sir Reginald, hear me—"

"Not now," replied the Baronet ; "I have no leisure to listen to the outpourings of your modesty, —your self-sacrificing modesty I may say. Gerard, I regret exceedingly that I am obliged to quit England so soon ; for your sake, —for my sake I regret

it. But the truth is this—that I have received a letter from one, who was once my friend, stating that he is on the point of death, and in an abject state of destitution. This man, whose name is Kirby, was a school-fellow of mine; he was my favourite companion,—my chosen friend,—the first to which my young heart ever clung in the sincerity of purest affection. Gerard, I have often heard you speak of school-boy friendships and associations,—in my bosom they were ever most strong. I look back upon the season of my youth as a hallowed time, and my school-house has become to me a sacred edifice. These are common feelings, perhaps; but in me they are unusually strong; for if I were to meet a beggar in the streets, whom I remembered as one of my schoolmates, methinks, that in spite of his rags and his filth, I could fold him to my bosom. But to my story.—This Leonard Kirby was the chosen friend of my bosom.

-He was the only son of an old general officer; and he had but one sister, who was several years younger than himself. With this sister I became acquainted, for I once passed my holidays at the general's; her name was Emma; she was a pretty little girl, and, as a matter of course, I fell in love with her. Most boys fall in love with one of their school-fellow's sisters. But Emma Kirby has little or nothing to do with what I am going to

tell you. Leonard, as I have said, was my friend ; and the covenant which we had formed at school we renewed upon our entrance into manhood. But I must be brief with this portion of my history.—Leonard wronged me. I cannot tell you how ; let it suffice that I trusted and was betrayed. I forgave him in my heart, but our intercourse was at an end, and to this day I have never seen him since. He left England shortly after the date of the transaction to which I have thus darkly alluded. His father was dead, and from the old man he had inherited a small property, sufficient to maintain him in a comfortable independence, but not to satisfy the insatiate appetites of one like Leonard Kirby. Abandoned, as he was, to many vicious excesses, and being an inveterate gamester, he soon managed to squander his little patrimony in the *salons* of licentious Paris. He fell ; he became leagued with evil people, and then began a career of vice, to which it is enough simply to allude. Poor Leonard ! when I think of what he was, when first I knew him in his early boyhood,—so pure,—so innocent,—so ‘unspotted of the world,’—so full of lofty aspirations,—when I think of his merry voice, and his light step, and his smiling face, and of how he would come running across the play-ground, when he saw me from afar off, tossing up his head and neighing with joy, like a young colt,—when I think of these

things, Gerard, and of the creature that he now is,—so fallen,—so disgraced,—so wretched,—steeped in infamy to the very lips, and fearfully, loathsomely diseased,—I cannot help it, Gerard, though little used to weep, the tears will steal down my cheeks.

“Had I not known him in his purity,” continued the good baronet, “I should have mourned less over his degradation. But to contemplate a change so entire, and so terrible as this, is like contemplating the fall of an angel, whom we have communed with in all the splendour of its celestial brightness; and well may we weep over such a fall. But that I may bring this sad history to a conclusion, I must tell you, Gerard, that I have this morning received a letter from Leonard Kirby, acquainting me with his wretched condition,—his poverty,—his wickedness, and his approaching death. He asks nothing from me but my forgiveness, and declares that he shall die in peace if he be assured that my curse is not upon him. What else, then, Gerard, can I do, but set forth with all despatch to save, if possible, my fallen friend? For this purpose I am going to Paris, that I may, at all events, comfort his last moments, if I can do nothing to rescue him from the death. You agree with me, Gerard; I am sure that I could not well act a different part.”

“It would be impossible, for a mind so noble

as yours, to act a different part," said I, "but the world——."

"Nay; no scandal against the world," interrupted the worthy baronet. "I think that there are very few men, who would not act as I am about to act on this occasion."

I shook my head—"But the sister," said I.

"She has been living, of late years, with a maternal aunt; and I have not seen her since the days of her childhood. Leonard tells me that he has written to implore the blessing of his sister before he dies—To implore the blessing of Emma Kirby! Oh! sure I am that every morn, and every night, her prayers are offered up for the soul—the wretched soul of her fallen brother."

"But, Sir Reginald," said I, "if I err not, you are about to leave the country at a time when she most requires your presence. You are about——"

"Ah! I know what you mean," interrupted the baronet, a faint smile playing upon his handsome countenance—"I know what you mean, Gerard—I regret it. But I should be very mean were I to suffer duty to succumb to vanity and allow my interest to deter me from doing that which I know to be right. I am to receive the deputation to-morrow—had it not been for this I should have started on my journey to-day.—But how easy will it be for my friends to find another much wiser, more informed, more experienced,

more suited in every respect than myself, to represent our beautiful county in the Senate-house. They tell me that I am popular in the county. I am glad of it—I rejoice in my popularity, because I have taken no pains to procure it, and have always abstained from mixing myself up with the violent politics of the place. I am glad of this also, because it proves to me—though in thus defending others, I am forced indirectly to compliment myself—because it proves to me that popularity is not always the result of a self-compromising and truckling spirit in its possessor, and that the world will sometimes set a due value upon one, who has neither humoured its follies, nor in any way truckled to its vices. But, enough of these self-gratulations.—You shall not be forgotten, Gerard,—if anything can be done for you, in my passage through London, it shall be done; but I tell you candidly that I do not expect that I shall be able to procure a situation for you, until my return. This is now the time of the Easter recess—during which there is always, as you know, a temporary stagnation of public affairs. But you may depend upon me, and with such reliance, that you may tell your father, whenever you please, that you will have nothing to say to the under-secretaryship of *Sierra Leone*. And now, Gerard, you will excuse me; I have much to do before I go.—Here is

the last *Chronicle*; or, if you like, you may amuse yourself in the library, or go down to the stables, and get them to saddle you a horse. — Good bye.”

“ God bless you, Sir Reginald.—God bless you, my kindest of friends !”

END OF VOL. I.

